SATURDAY
May 16, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
18 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 57 • No. 116

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

To subscribe, give a missed call at 9828331787 or scan QR code

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Seventeen years later, imprints of war remain

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CEO allays fears of voter deletions during SIR

BENGALURU

With the SIR of electoral rolls set to begin in the State from June 20, CEO V. Anbu Kumar sought to allay concerns over alleged deletion of voters from the electoral rolls. » PAGE 6

E-Khata open houses at 52 locations in city

BENGALURU

The GBA will operationalise e-Khata open houses under the title "Nanna e-Khata, Nanna Hakku" at 52 different locations across the city from Saturday. » PAGE 5

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Petrol, diesel prices hiked by ₹3 per litre

The move will help state-run oil marketing companies stem some losses caused by global prices; Centre imposes windfall tax on petrol exports

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel prices were hiked by ₹3 a litre across all variants on Friday, in the first major increase in more than four years.

The move will help state-run oil marketing companies (OMCs) stem some of their losses caused by global price and supply pressures due to the war in West Asia.

The price of the regular variant of petrol is now ₹97.77 a litre in Delhi, while that of diesel is ₹90.67 a litre. Premium and high-octane variants have also seen a similar increase. Compressed natural gas (CNG) prices were also hiked by ₹2 a kg.

This is the first major hike – defined as more than ₹1 a litre – on regular retail fuel since the approximately ₹9 hike executed in a staggered manner over the course of a week in March 2022, soon after Russia invaded Ukraine.

Since then, OMCs have periodically announced minimal increases of a few paise per litre, but no major hikes. The Centre also imposed a windfall gains tax of ₹3 a litre on petrol exports, while reducing the levy on diesel to ₹16.5 a litre and aviation turbine fuel to ₹16 a litre, effective Saturday.

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Fuelling fury: A protest against the hike in petrol and diesel prices in Vijayawada on Friday. G.N. RAO

Petrol to cost ₹106.71, diesel ₹94.10 in city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Petrol prices rose by ₹3.21 per litre, taking the revised rate to ₹106.17 per litre, while diesel prices increased by ₹3.11 per litre to ₹94.10 per litre, in Bengaluru, on Friday, after oil marketing companies effected the new rates across all categories.

The sharp hike triggered public outrage, with many citizens expressing concern over the growing burden of transportation and daily expenses.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah strongly criticised the Union government, calling the fuel price increase an "anti-people decision".

In a statement, Mr. Siddaramaiah accused the Narendra Modi-led government of "punishing the people for its own failures".

RELATED REPORTS ON
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India's goods exports climb to $43.6 billion

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Despite significant headwinds to trade due to the West Asia crisis, the value of India's merchandise exports grew nearly 14% in April 2026 to $43.6 billion, official data released on Friday showed.

This performance was due in part to the overall rise in prices as well as to the efforts by Indian exporters to diversify their markets, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Friday. The overall trade deficit, counting merchandise and services, fell 30% in April 2026 to $7.8 billion.

"The positive growth in value can have some contribution from prices because prices of many things are going up," Mr. Agrawal said at a press briefing. "It is also to the credit of our industry, which has been able to maintain the supply chains and look at new markets and diversify their exports."

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Trump says U.S., China 'settled a lot of problems'

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

United States President Donald Trump wrapped up his China visit saying both sides had agreed on "fantastic trade deals" and "settled a lot of problems", following his second day of talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"We've settled a lot of problems that other people wouldn't have been able to solve," Mr. Trump said in his opening remarks, before their private talks. Mr. Xi said both sides "had reached important common understandings on maintaining stable economic and trade ties, expanding practical cooperation in various fields, and properly addressing each other's concerns."

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Misty peaks

A view of snow-clad mountains in Pulwama district of south Kashmir on Friday morning. IMRAN NISSAR

High Court directs Centre to act on Darshan's complaint of 'media trial'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Observing that reports telecast on television channels and published on digital platforms on the ongoing murder trial involving Kannada actor Darshan, a prime accused, "*prima facie* amount to a calculated, media-driven adjudication, contrary to norms and in violation of court injunctions", the High Court of Karnataka has directed the Central government to act on the complaint filed by the actor against media houses.

"The material placed on record, particularly the clippings produced, unfortunately depict a disturbing trend wherein the broadcast media has gone to the extent of recreating courtroom proceedings, with only the face of the presiding judge being masked, while the faces of the accused and counsel are openly displayed," the court stated.

Such programmes, the court stated, were telecast on every date of hearing, thereby "converting pending judicial proceedings" into a form of "public spectacle".

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum passed the order while partly allowing a petition filed by Darshan, who is accused number 2 in the Renukaswamy murder case of 2024.

Darshan had sought directions to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to act on his complaint, filed in January 2026, against the media houses under provisions of the Cable Television Networks Regulations (CTNR) Act 1995, CTN Rules, Information Technology (IT) Act of 2000, IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

The actor contended in his petition that although the trial remained nascent, television and digital platforms conducted a media trial, spreading speculation, selective leaks and unverified claims, shaping public opinion, undermining a fair trial and violating media laws.

The petition further stated that despite interim injunctions from civil court and the High Court restraining publication of confidential charge sheet material, several television channels and digital platforms continued to telecast such content in violation of the orders.

The continued telecast of such content, in the teeth of subsisting injunction orders, reflected "a blatant disregard for judicial authority" and contributed to the "creation of a carnival atmosphere of justice", Justice Magadum said, while observing that "such conduct amounts to a calculated media-driven adjudication, fostering a parallel narrative and engendering prejudicial pretrial publicity".

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SC FLAGS 'SLOW' TRIAL
» PAGE 6

Why Indian chess needs more big-ticket, Super GM tournaments

The country is currently the sport's super power, but its emerging players must compete regularly against the world's top stars to attain an elite level. They must not be forced to find the means to travel around the globe for this opportunity. Besides, high-category events featuring the likes of Carlsen, Caruana and Nakamura will only help the game's marketing in India

P.K. Ajith Kumar

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

> Uzbekistan understands the importance of having elite tournaments. As a result, you can see the young Uzbek players getting stronger and new talents emerging

> When I came close to reaching 2700, I had written to the organisers of several big international tournaments, but nothing happened. If we had such tournaments in India, players like me would have benefited greatly
>
> **S.L. NARAYANAN**
> Former top-40 player

It was the day Lionel Messi landed in Mumbai. The Wankhede Stadium looked as tense with anticipation as it would on an IPL match-day, with thousands waiting to get in.

Not far away, at the Royal Opera House, stars – many of them, in fact – of a different sport were also being awaited by fans. It was the opening day of the Global Chess League's third edition. After debuting in Dubai and then moving to London, the league, a joint venture of Tech Mahindra and world chess governing body FIDE, arrived in Mumbai last December.

Back in India

Last week, the Indian tech giant announced that the GCL's fourth edition would also be held in India. That means the country's chess followers will again get to witness the biggest names in the game. They had come in large numbers for every day of the league. And they got to meet and click photos with their favourite stars.

"The response from the spectators was tremendous in Mumbai, and the sponsors were also happy, and we therefore felt the GCL could have another season in India," GCL commissioner Gourav Rakshit tells *The Hindu* over the phone from the United States. "Even when future editions of the league are held abroad, we will continue to have an event every year in India."

India is the superpower in world chess at the moment. The reigning World champion is an Indian. India is the reigning team champion, too, among both men and women. India will contest the World Championship match this year in both sections. The current women's World Cup winner is an Indian, as is the World junior boys' champion.

Much is right with Indian chess, yes. But, the fact remains that India needs more big-ticket events like the GCL. And if the country wants to strengthen its bench, plenty of elite tournaments must be staged.

India is now an important host for FIDE's official events. Last year, Goa staged the World Cup, the most prestigious knockout event on the chess calendar. In 2022, Mamallapuram, near Chennai, was the venue for the Olympiad, the ultimate team championship in chess, something like the Davis Cup of tennis. In such events, only a few selected Indians can compete. What India needs is high-category private tournaments featuring the world's top stars – events that will give opportunities to players just outside the very elite and that will also help the game attract attention.

Of course, chess is getting increasingly popular in the country, and these days it probably gets more space in the media than anywhere else in the world, but big events in which the likes of Magnus Carlsen, Fabiano Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura take on the best Indian talents would not hurt the marketing of the game. And for India's emerging players, such tournaments can provide big breaks.

> Of course we need such tournaments... The GCL has proved that India can conceive and execute such exciting, star-studded tournaments
>
> **PRAVIN THIPSAY**
> India's third GM

Take the case of the Tata Steel Chess India tournament that is held in Kolkata. It is the only event that brings the world's biggest stars to the country every year. The organisers also ensure that India's bright young talents get opportunities. In 2021, Arjun Erigaisi, who was seeded eighth in a field of 10, won the rapid section, and then tied for the top prize in the blitz category, which he only played after compatriot B. Adhiban pulled out because of illness. That proved a turning point in Arjun's career. He is now the world's highest-ranked Indian.

Springboard for success

The following year, R. Vaishali stunned the field by winning the women's blitz title, after starting out as the seventh seed. That was the biggest win of her career until that point. Last month she won the Candidates tournament in Cyprus to earn the right to challenge Ju Wenjun for this year's Women's World Championship.

When Vaishali withdrew from the 2023 event at the last minute, Divya Deshmukh replaced her. Divya began as the 10th seed, in a field of 10, and went on to win the rapid title. That was the biggest win of her career until she won the World Cup last year.

In 2023, the inaugural edition of Chennai Grandmasters, the strongest tournament ever in India (with an average rating of 2711) at that point in time, was organised hastily to help players like D. Gukesh and Arjun qualify for the Candidates. Gukesh won the tournament and took the last available spot at the Candidates, which he won in Toronto in 2024. A few months later, he defeated Ding Liren to become the youngest World champion in history, at 18.

If the Chennai Grandmasters hadn't happened, India would not have had its second World champion (some 24 years after Viswanathan Anand triumphed at Tehran). Gukesh will be challenged later this year by Javokhir Sindarov, the Uzbek who is very much the man of the moment in world chess.

Uzbekistan is one country that could challenge India when it comes to outstanding young talent. "Uzbekistan understands the importance of having elite tournaments," S.L. Narayanan, a talented youngster who hasn't got the opportunities he deserves, tells *The Hindu* over the phone from Germany. "You also see Uzbekistan conducting matches [a series of games between two players]. As a result, you can see the young Uzbek players getting stronger and new talents emerging."

Narayanan was once ranked 40th in the world. "If we had such tournaments in India, players like me would have benefited greatly, instead of travelling across the globe," says the Thiruvananthapuram-based Grandmaster. "When I came close to reaching 2700, I had written to the organisers of several big international tournaments, but nothing happened. We need at least four high-category events in India."

Not that it is difficult to conduct such events. You don't need to hire a stadium or invite a large number of players. All you need is intent. Given the status Indian chess enjoys at the moment, corporates are likely to offer sponsorships.

Showing the way

Chessbase India, with help from MGD1 and the Tamil Nadu government, showed the way with the Chennai Grandmasters, the second edition of which was won by Aravindh Chithambaram. One of the most gifted Indian players, he promised a lot more when he won sensationally, at the age of 14, the Chennai Grandmaster Open that was staged as a sidelight of the 2013 World title match between Anand and Carlsen at Chennai.

Players like Aravindh, Narayanan, V. Pranav and M. Pranesh could help Indian chess become stronger if they get to play Super Grandmaster tournaments in India. "Of course we need such tournaments," says Pravin Thipsay, India's third GM. "Given the format of the GCL, not many young Indians can be selected in the franchises. The league has proved that India can conceive and execute such exciting, star-studded tournaments."

There should be more. Remember, Anand never got to play an elite private tournament in India when he was among the world's top three for the better part of two decades. At least his successors deserve better.

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Jannik Sinner	24	14,350	20
2	Carlos Alcaraz	22	12,960	18
3	Alexander Zverev	29	5,805	22
4	Novak Djokovic	38	4,700	17
5	Felix Auger-Aliassime	25	4,050	24
6	Ben Shelton	23	4,030	22
7	Taylor Fritz	28	3,770	23
8	Alex de Minaur	27	3,755	22
9	Daniil Medvedev	30	3,460	24
10	Lorenzo Musetti	24	3,415	23
11	Alexander Bublik	28	3,355	26
12	Flavio Cobolli	23	2,750	28
13	Jiri Lehecka	24	2,715	22
14	Andrey Rublev	28	2,590	24
15	Karen Khachanov	29	2,220	24

Top Indians ▶

Sumit Nagal
Rank 276 ▲ 1 spot

Manas Dhamne
Rank 384 ▲ 60 spots

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	28	10,110	19
2	Elena Rybakina	26	8,555	23
3	Iga Swiatek	24	6,948	19
4	Coco Gauff	22	6,749	19
5	Jessica Pegula	32	6,136	21
6	Amanda Anisimova	24	5,985	20
7	Mirra Andreeva	19	4,181	21
8	Jasmine Paolini	30	3,722	20
9	Victoria Mboko	19	3,531	21
10	Elina Svitolina	31	3,530	15
11	Karolina Muchova	29	3,318	18
12	Belinda Bencic	29	3,090	19
13	Linda Noskova	21	2,999	23
14	Ekaterina Alexandrova	31	2,669	26
15	Marta Kostyuk	23	2,507	19

Top Indians ▶

Sahaja Yamalapalli
Rank 358 ▲ 28 spots

Vaishnavi Adkar
Rank 397 ▼ 12 spots

English Premier League Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Arsenal	36	24	7	5	68	26	42	79
2	Man. City	36	23	8	5	75	32	43	77
3	Man. United	36	18	11	7	63	48	15	65
4	Liverpool	36	17	8	11	60	48	12	59
5	Aston Villa	36	17	8	11	50	46	4	59
6	Bournemouth	36	13	16	7	56	52	4	55
7	Brighton	36	14	11	11	52	42	10	53
8	Brentford	36	14	9	13	52	49	3	51
9	Chelsea	36	13	10	13	55	49	6	49
10	Everton	36	13	10	13	46	46	0	49
11	Fulham	36	14	6	16	44	50	-6	48
12	Sunderland	36	12	12	12	37	46	-9	48
13	Newcastle	36	13	7	16	50	52	-2	46
14	Leeds United	36	10	14	12	48	53	-5	44
15	Crystal Palace	36	11	11	14	38	47	-9	44
16	N. Forest	36	11	10	15	45	47	-2	43
17	Tottenham	36	9	11	16	46	55	-9	38
18	West Ham	36	9	9	18	42	62	-20	36
19	Burnley	36	4	9	23	37	73	-36	21
20	Wolves	36	3	9	24	25	66	-41	18

Italian Serie A Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Inter Milan	36	27	4	5	85	31	54	85
2	Napoli	36	21	7	8	54	36	18	70
3	Juventus	36	19	11	6	59	30	29	68
4	AC Milan	36	19	10	7	50	32	18	67
5	Roma	36	21	4	11	55	31	24	67
6	Como	36	18	11	7	60	28	32	65
7	Atalanta	36	15	13	8	50	34	16	58
8	Bologna	36	15	7	14	45	43	2	52
9	Lazio	36	13	12	11	39	37	2	51
10	Udinese	36	14	8	14	45	46	-1	50
11	Sassuolo	36	14	7	15	44	46	-2	49
12	Torino	36	12	8	16	41	59	-18	44
13	Parma	36	10	12	14	27	45	-18	42
14	Genoa	36	10	11	15	40	48	-8	41
15	Fiorentina	36	8	14	14	38	49	-11	38
16	Cagliari	36	9	10	17	36	51	-15	37
17	Lecce	36	8	8	20	24	48	-24	32
18	Cremonese	36	7	10	19	30	53	-23	31
19	Verona	36	3	11	22	24	58	-34	20
20	Pisa	36	2	12	22	25	66	-41	18

Spanish LaLiga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Barcelona	36	30	1	5	91	32	59	91
2	Real Madrid	36	25	5	6	72	33	39	80
3	Villarreal	36	21	6	9	67	43	24	69
4	Atletico Madrid	36	20	6	10	60	39	21	66
5	Real Betis	36	14	15	7	56	44	12	57
6	Celta Vigo	36	13	11	12	51	47	4	50
7	Getafe	36	14	6	16	31	37	-6	48
8	Real Sociedad	36	11	12	13	55	56	-1	45
9	Athletic Club	36	13	5	18	40	53	-13	44
10	Rayo Vallecano	36	10	14	12	37	43	-6	44
11	Valencia	36	11	10	15	39	51	-12	43
12	Sevilla	36	12	7	17	46	58	-12	43
13	Osasuna	36	11	9	16	43	47	-4	42
14	Espanyol	36	11	9	16	40	53	-13	42
15	Girona	36	9	13	14	38	53	-15	40
16	Alaves	36	10	10	16	42	54	-12	40
17	Elche	36	9	12	15	47	56	-9	39
18	Real Mallorca	36	10	9	17	44	55	-11	39
19	Levante	36	10	9	17	44	59	-15	39
20	Real Oviedo	36	6	11	19	26	56	-30	29

German Bundesliga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Bayern	33	27	5	1	117	35	82	86
2	Dortmund	33	21	7	5	68	34	34	70
3	RB Leipzig	33	20	5	8	65	43	22	65
4	Stuttgart	33	18	7	8	69	47	22	61
5	Hoffenheim	33	18	7	8	65	48	17	61
6	Leverkusen	33	17	7	9	67	46	21	58
7	SC Freiburg	33	12	8	13	47	56	-9	44
8	Eintracht	33	11	10	12	59	63	-4	43
9	FC Augsburg	33	12	7	14	45	57	-12	43
10	Mainz	33	9	10	14	42	53	-11	37
11	Hamburg	33	9	10	14	39	53	-14	37
12	Union Berlin	33	9	9	15	40	58	-18	36
13	M'gladbach	33	8	11	14	38	53	-15	35
14	Cologne	33	7	11	15	48	58	-10	32
15	Werder	33	8	8	17	37	58	-21	32
16	Wolfsburg	33	6	8	19	42	68	-26	26
17	Heidenheim	33	6	8	19	41	70	-29	26
18	St Pauli	33	6	8	19	28	57	-29	26

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Joe Root	880	932
2	Harry Brook	857	898
3	Travis Head	853	884
4	Steve Smith	831	947
5	Kane Williamson	822	919
6	Kamindu Mendis	781	784
7	Temba Bavuma	775	806
8	Yashasvi Jaiswal	750	858
9	Shubman Gill	730	807
10	Dinesh Chandimal	717	755

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	879	908
2	Mitchell Starc	838	852
3	Matt Henry	836	853
4	Pat Cummins	832	914
5	Noman Ali	825	853
5	Marco Jansen	825	825
7	Scott Boland	820	820
8	Kagiso Rabada	807	902
9	Josh Hazlewood	775	864
10	Nathan Lyon	753	812

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Daryl Mitchell	815	840
2	Virat Kohli	791	908
3	Ibrahim Zadran	756	756
4	Rohit Sharma	748	879
5	Shubman Gill	716	841
6	Babar Azam	684	894
7	Shai Hope	679	782
7	Harry Tector	679	730
9	K.L. Rahul	664	676
9	Salman Agha	664	664

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	705	775
2	Jofra Archer	649	682
3	Keshav Maharaj	645	737
4	Adil Rashid	629	671
5	Josh Hazlewood	626	725
6	Maheesh Theekshana	624	680
6	Kuldeep Yadav	624	757
8	Mehidy Hasan	621	722
9	Mitchell Santner	599	656
9	Adam Zampa	599	696

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Abhishek Sharma	875	931
2	Ishan Kishan	871	871
3	Sahibzada Farhan	848	848
4	Phil Salt	792	881
5	Pathum Nissanka	766	796
6	Tilak Varma	742	845
7	Suryakumar Yadav	722	912
8	Jos Buttler	716	794
9	Dewald Brevis	702	738
10	Brian Bennett	701	708

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	753	828
2	Varun Chakaravarthy	740	818
3	Abrar Ahmed	736	757
4	Adil Rashid	721	747
5	Jasprit Bumrah	702	783
6	Adam Zampa	682	746
7	Corbin Bosch	669	745
8	Matthew Forde	667	679
9	Mujeeb Ur Rahman	663	757
10	Nathan Ellis	661	678

Increase in fuel price triggers public outrage in city

Citizens say the increase will worsen the financial burden on middle-class families already struggling with rising prices of essentials; gig workers, auto and cab drivers also voice their concern

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Residents, commuters, cab drivers and gig workers in Bengaluru expressed anger and concern on Friday after fuel prices saw a sharp increase across categories, raising fears of a further rise in transportation and daily living costs.

The fuel prices in Bengaluru were revised on Friday, with petrol now priced at ₹106.17 per litre after an increase of ₹3.21 per litre. Diesel prices also saw a hike of ₹3.11 per litre, taking the revised price to ₹94.10 per litre.

Meanwhile, fuel sold by private retailers continues to be more expensive. During the previous month, amid tensions in West Asia, private companies had already raised prices in the city.

In a private outlet in Bengaluru, regular unleaded petrol (ULP) is priced at ₹119.92 per litre, while high-speed diesel (HSD) costs ₹123.51 per litre. Premium variants are even costlier, with petrol retailing at ₹129.92 per litre and diesel at ₹133.51 per litre.

The sudden hike has triggered widespread frustration among citizens who say the increase will worsen the financial burden on middle-class families already struggling with rising prices of essentials.

Prakash K., a resident of J.P. Nagar 4th Phase, said that the increase was unfair at a time when households were already battling inflation and rising grocery prices. "Prices of vegetables, groceries and other essential commodities have already skyrocketed over the past few months. Now, with fuel prices going up again, transportation costs will also increase and that will eventually affect the prices of almost every product in the market," he said. Ramya Shekar, a resident of Seshadripuram, said that the fuel price hike would directly impact commuters like her who rely on cabs and autorickshaws for daily travel.

People refuelling their vehicles at a petrol pump in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Fuel prices in Bengaluru

Fuel	Price (₹/litre)	Change (₹/litre)
Petrol	₹106.17	+₹3.21
Diesel	₹94.10	+₹3.11

Note: Prices may vary among oil marketing companies across Bengaluru

> The increase is unfair at a time when households are already battling inflation and rising grocery prices
>
> **PRAKASH K.**
> A resident of Seshadripuram

"Cab and auto fares in Bengaluru are already expensive compared to earlier years, and now this increase in fuel prices will become another reason for transport operators to raise fares. Common people who travel daily for work or other needs will be forced to spend more every month. Many people feel these hikes are delayed until elections are over in different States, which create an impression that the public is being misled," she said. The auto and cab drivers who depend on CNG-run vehicles also voiced concern over the increase in gas prices and the continuing shortage of the CNG supply in parts of the city. Manjunath H.S., a cab driver from Kengeri, said that the hike had added to the difficulties already faced by drivers.

"There is already a shortage of CNG and LPG in several places and drivers are forced to wait in long queues to refill. Now, with prices also going up, it has become an additional burden on us. We cannot keep increasing fares because customers will stop booking rides, but at the same time our expenses are continuously rising. Both drivers and passengers are going to suffer because of this decision," he said.

Gig workers also expressed concern over declining monthly savings amid increasing operational expenses. Vikram Kumar, a food delivery executive from Koramanagala, said that the fuel costs form a major portion of their daily spending and the latest increase would directly affect their earnings. "It is increasingly becoming difficult to sustain ourselves with the current incentives paid by delivery platforms. We may now have to complete more deliveries every day just to maintain the same monthly income. The companies should consider increasing payments or incentives for delivery workers because otherwise many of us will struggle to manage our expenses," he said.

No hike in bus fares: Minister

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said on Friday that there is no proposal to hike the travel fares of buses operated by the government in the State in view of the increase in fuel prices.

Speaking to pressperson in Udupi, the Minister said that the Centre should reintroduce the subsidy on fuel to reduce the burden on the people from the hike in prices.

Fuel price hike an 'attack on common man': Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday strongly criticised the Union government over the increase in petrol and diesel prices, terming the move an "anti-people decision" that would place an additional burden on ordinary citizens already struggling with rising living costs.

In a statement, Mr. Siddaramaiah accused the Modi-led government of "punishing the people for its own failures". He alleged that the Centre's "failed foreign policy, poor economic management and reckless handling of inflation" had forced the government to pass the burden on to the public.

The Chief Minister, who also holds charge of the Finance portfolio, warned that the hike would trigger a cascading effect on essential commodities and services. He said transport charges, vegetable and grocery prices, milk rates, construction costs, school van fees, taxi and autorickshaw fares, and agricultural input expenses were all expected to rise in the coming days.

"The burden will fall heavily on farmers, workers, small traders, women managing household budgets and the middle-class," he said. Mr. Siddaramaiah further alleged that when global crude oil prices were low, the Union government did not provide adequate relief to consumers and instead collected high taxes to increase its revenue.

Siddaramaiah

The Chief Minister has accused the Modi-led government at the Centre of 'punishing the people for its own failures'

"But when prices rise, it immediately transfers the burden to citizens. This is not governance; this is exploitation," he said.

The Chief Minister also accused the Centre of failing to control inflation, protect the rupee and manage the economy effectively. Demanding an immediate rollback of the fuel price hike, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should "take responsibility" for the hardships faced by ordinary families.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Friday blamed the Centre for the rising cost of living, stating that "price rise is Modi's contribution". He said the increase in fuel and essential commodity prices has placed a heavy burden on common people.

Speaking to reporters, Mr. Shivakumar criticised the Centre's handling of international issues, linking it to the current surge in prices. He questioned how people can manage daily life without using petrol, saying that travel is essential for livelihoods.

He also termed suggestions to reduce fuel consumption and avoid buying gold as impractical, saying such measures are unrealistic for ordinary citizens managing everyday needs.

'Cycle of loot'

All India Congress Committee general secretary in charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala on Friday accused the NDA government of running a "cycle of loot" by increasing fuel prices following the conflict in West Asia. In a press note, he alleged that over the last 11 years, the Modi government had collected ₹43 lakh crore through taxes on petrol and diesel. "This comes to ₹1,000 crore every single day since 2014," he alleged.

'New I-T Act is taxpayer-centric'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Income Tax Act, 2025 has been designed to improve ease of understanding, reduce complexities, and encourage greater voluntary compliance, said Vidisha Kalra, Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Karnataka & Goa Region.

She was speaking at PRARAMBH-2026, an outreach and awareness programme organised to offer better understanding of the new Tax Act to tax payers in the City.

"The Income Tax Act, 2025 marks a significant step towards building a simpler, more transparent, and taxpayer-centric tax administration system," she said. Ms. Kalra encouraged taxpayers, professionals, and trade bodies to actively utilise the I-T department's digital initiatives and facilitation measures for seamless compliance and enhanced taxpayer services.

Smooth transition

PRARAMBH-2026 focused on facilitating a smooth transition from the Income-tax Act, 1961 to the Income Tax Act, 2025, with emphasis on simplification of provisions, rationalisation of sections and forms, and enhancement of taxpayer facilitation measures. The event also featured demonstrations of the Department's digital initiatives, including "Kar Saathi" an AI Chatbot, and awareness programmes such as Kar Setu (a guidance note in the form of frequently asked questions on the interplay between the Income-tax Act, 1961 and the Income-tax Act, 2025).

Brochures

A comic book titled "Madhukar Explains the Income- tax Act, 2025", informative brochures, and Samvaad, all aimed at enhancing taxpayer engagement and support.

The programme was attended by top taxpayers and key stakeholders, including representatives from trade bodies, Chartered Accountants' Associations, Tax Practitioners' Associations, and members of the Tax Bar.

Universities must become engines of employability: CM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

"The transition from campus to careers must be seamless. Universities must become engines of employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership, and degrees must be matched by practical skills," said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, inaugurating the Karnataka C2C (Campus to Career) Summit in Bengaluru on Friday.

The C2C Summit will bridge the gap between academic learning and industry expectations by bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, academic institutions, and skill development organisations, he said, adding that the summit reflects Karnataka's determination to prepare our young people not merely for the jobs of today, but for the opportunities of tomorrow.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Ministers, and others during the inauguration of Campus to Career Summit 2026 in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

"The State's continued leadership in the economic sphere will depend on a strong and purposeful partnership between government, academia, and industry. These three pillars must work in unison to ensure that education remains aligned with the opportunities of a rapidly changing global economy. Therefore, our universities must go beyond awarding degrees; they must equip students with practical skills, innovative capacity, and the confidence to succeed in real-world challenges...Above all, it must create pathways to a life of dignity and economic security," the Chief Minister said.

Minister for Higher Education M.C. Sudhakar said the Summit was organized with the vision of providing skill-based education to students in higher education, thereby enabling and creating employment opportunities. "The initiative aims to equip students in government colleges and universities with globally relevant and industry-required skills. The summit will focus on integrating industry-required skills into academic curricula and preparing students with practical exposure and technological competence," he said.

The Karnataka State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) expanded the scope of SCOUT-Scholars for Outstanding Undergraduate Students, launched recently, to more public universities in the State. This fully funded, two-week residential programme, hosted by a selected university in the U.K., will support 30 outstanding undergraduate students. The Higher Education Department signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with several institutions regarding skill development and higher education.

APU failed to take preventive measures despite knowledge of potential flare-up: Fact-finding report

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A fact-finding report by a host of civil society groups, including People's Union for Civil Liberties-Karnataka, on the violent protests on the Azim Premji University campus on February 24 and the subsequent sequence of events, has observed that despite having prior knowledge about the potential flare-up, the university administration failed to take preventive measures.

The report, which is a culmination of testimonies from students, faculty members and the police over two months, was released by the PUCL-Karnataka, Bahutva Karnataka, Naaveddu Nilladiddare, All India Students' Federation, Collective, All India Lawyers' Association for Justice-Karnataka, and All India Forum for Right to Education.

Activists from various civil society groups at a press conference in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

The report claimed that there was unanimous opinion among students and faculty members that the FIR against SPARK-APU, which had organised a discussion that drew protests from Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), and the suspension of a student were disproportionate responses on the part of the university administration.

"The university has failed to make a single statement to the public, condemning the violent attack by the ABVP. They have also failed to pressure authorities to avoid delay in the investigation and ensure that strict action be taken against the vigilante mob," the report noted.

Clashes broke out on the campus premises when members of the ABVP vandalised the campus property and force-entered the premises, protesting a discussion on Kashmir organised by the SPARK-APU, a student-led group.

An FIR was registered against the ABVP members based on a complaint lodged by the APU Head of Security, and against the SPARK-APU after a complaint from the university Registrar.

The APU also formed a Special Disciplinary Committee to investigate the incident, following which a student was suspended for two years, and a written warning was issued to two others.

"Students and faculty members shared with the fact-finding team that such hearings placed an unjustifiable responsibility on students for the incident on February 24. They also agree that the suspension of the student for two years is highly unjustified," the report noted.

The fact-finding team urged the university to withdraw all charges against the SPARK-APU, revoke the suspension of the student and remove the restrictions on students' activities which aim at promoting critical thinking.

When *The Hindu* reached out for a comment on Friday, the APU did not respond.

Video Surveillance System commissioned at railway station

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A state-of-the-art Video Surveillance System (VSS) has been commissioned at the Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna (KSR) Bengaluru Railway Station at Majestic to strengthen railway security infrastructure and enhance passenger safety through advanced surveillance technologies.

According to South Western Railway (SWR), the new surveillance system became operational on May 13 and provides comprehensive monitoring coverage across the station premises. The surveillance network covers station entrances and exits, circulating areas, booking offices, reservation halls, concourses, platforms, subways, foot overbridges, waiting halls and other vulnerable locations.

The SWR said that the system enables round-the-clock monitoring of passenger movement and station activities. As part of the project, 168 IP-based high-definition CCTV cameras compliant with Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) specifications have been installed to ensure reliable and high-quality surveillance throughout the station. The VSS has been integrated with an advanced Video Management System, along with Video Analytics (VA) features, for intelligent monitoring and improved situational awareness. "The VA is capable of automatically detecting predefined security events and abnormal activities, thereby helping security personnel undertake proactive monitoring and ensure quicker response to incidents," an official said. In another security enhancement, the surveillance system has also been integrated with Facial Recognition Software (FRS) to improve identification and monitoring capabilities.

Railway officials said, "A database containing records of 1,086 criminals has been uploaded to the FRS platform to assist security agencies in identifying suspicious persons and strengthening surveillance measures." The officials said that the entire VSS network and associated systems underwent a comprehensive cybersecurity audit by STQC Bengaluru and received a "Zero Vulnerability Report".

GETTY IMAGES

How 'Kvaradona' entered the Ballon d'Or conversation

Khvicha Kvaratskhelia has put together a Champions League campaign that has made him a legitimate candidate for football's top individual honour — almost ironic for such a selfless team player. The PSG winger has decided big matches with jaw-dropping moments, powering the defending European champion to another final

> I will do everything for the team. [Coach Luis Enrique] can shout at me or say whatever he wants, because I know he wants to make me a better version of myself
> **KVARATSKHELIA**

Associated Press
Agence France-Presse

For some time now, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia has been one of the most spectacular players to watch in world football. A highly skilful winger who plays with ferocious intensity, the 25-year-old is a full-back's worst nightmare: agile and tricky in tight spaces, explosive over open ground.

Nicknamed 'Kvaradona' by adoring Napoli fans, who saw in the Georgian glimpses of their hero Diego Maradona, Kvaratskhelia has found an even higher level since moving to Paris. Already a box-office attraction for football diehards, he has put together a season, especially in the Champions League, that has made him a legitimate candidate for the Ballon d'Or.

Dominating Europe

With his minutes carefully managed in Ligue 1 – just 15 90s for Paris Saint-Germain – he has attacked Europe with all his energy. In the Champions League, he has scored 10 goals and set up six others, completed two dribbles per game, and decided big matches with jaw-dropping moments. He is the first player ever to contribute a goal or an assist in seven successive knockout fixtures of a single Champions League campaign.

"He is such an important player for us," said PSG coach Luis Enrique. "Not just for his abilities but for what he transmits as a player."

Maradona isn't the only iconic player Kvaratskhelia has drawn comparisons with. His quarterfinal performance against Liverpool, all darting runs and jinking feet, led the British press to liken his style of play to that of George Best, the late Manchester United great known for his phenomenal dribbling, amazing balance and eye-catching goals. A fine solo effort in the first leg, where he danced his way into the penalty box, evaded the Liverpool men trying to stop him, rounded the goalkeeper and slotted the ball home, would have won Best's approval.

Kvaratskhelia had scored with a brilliant curler against Chelsea in the first leg of the last 16 and followed it up with another goal in the away leg as PSG routed the London side 8-2 on aggregate. Prior to that, it was a goal midway through the second half that turned the tide PSG's way in a tough playoff against Monaco. As if those moments weren't enough, Kvaratskhelia stepped up again in the semifinal against Bayern Munich, producing two defining performances.

> He's the best winger in the world right now. There's no one better than him
> **STEVEN GERRARD**
> Liverpool legend

In a pulsating first leg full of individual brilliance, which PSG won 5-4, Kvaratskhelia scored twice. For the first, he cut in past his marker from the left, created separation and found the perfect far-post finish. For the second, he arrived at exactly the right moment in the box, as a squared pass went past scrambling attackers and defenders, and timed his strike perfectly. In the 1-1 second-leg draw, Kvaratskhelia showed the many other facets of his game. Released down the left flank with an excellent through ball, the Georgian accelerated into space, delayed just long enough to freeze the defence and cut the ball back for Ousmane Dembele's goal.

While Dembele was taken off after an hour, Kvaratskhelia remained on the pitch to endure, resist and attack again. At times he looked exhausted, briefly bent over during defensive recoveries or dragging a leg after another sprint. Seconds later he would explode forward once more, an ever-present outlet. He won 11 of 15 duels and completed six of seven dribbles. In a game largely spent defending deep and attacking on transition, he shouldered a big burden.

Kvaratskhelia's ability to defend or attack with equal commitment and aplomb is symbolic of this PSG team and a far cry from the days of chasing big names and falling short on Europe's biggest stage. Indeed, nobody fulfils head coach Luis Enrique's relentless collective demands, on structure, sacrifice and intensity more willingly than the low-profile Georgian.

Kvaratskhelia is extremely hard-working without the ball, constantly pressing, tracking back and tackling. Effectively, this gives PSG two players in one: a game-breaking winger and a diligent auxiliary full-back. "I have really improved in defence with Luis," he said. "In this team we need to defend like proper defenders. I will do everything for the team."

Team player

It's almost ironic that such a selfless team player is in contention for football's biggest individual award. Dembele, his PSG teammate, won the Ballon d'Or last year, and Kvaratskhelia is making a case for it to remain in Paris, one way or another this year. Dembele, who is in the running, has the World Cup to strengthen his claim; Kvaratskhelia won't have that opportunity in football's global showcase, with Georgia not qualifying for the quadrennial event.

But the winger still has the Champions League final. Besides, he has already done enough over the season, drawing high praise not just from his corner but also from some of the game's best-known names. "For me, all year long, he's been a top-level player," said Enrique. "He has a quality in the character that he shows, no matter the match – that's very important."

Liverpool legend Steven Gerrard anointed Kvaratskhelia the best winger in the world. "Just so powerful, so dangerous," Gerrard told *TNT Sports*. "He can go both ways, but it's also the other side of the game. A lot of wingers only want to do the side of the game when they have the ball at their feet. They want to do the exciting things. This guy does the lot. He works hard, he tackles, he fights. He's the best winger in the world right now. There's no one better than him."

Four-time Champions League winner Clarence Seedorf went a step further. "Kvaratskhelia is the best player in the world and he's only going to get better," the former Real Madrid, Ajax and AC Milan midfielder said on *Amazon Prime*. "He just knows what to do in every situation. He carries the team in certain moments. I like his intelligence. He's the extra man in midfield and also goes to make a difference up front. He's unbelievable."

Twin missions

Kvaratskhelia is thankful for both the love and the critical acclaim, but the accolades don't distract him from his twin missions: constant improvement and trophy collection. And his focus, as ever, is not on individual awards like the Ballon D'Or, but on team success.

"I'm working every day," he said in an interview with *Le Parisien*. "I have a great relationship with Enrique. He can shout at me or say whatever he wants, because I know he wants to make me a better version of myself.

"It's always a good thing to have some competition within the team but we're more focused on pushing one another to be better. That's extremely positive for the team, because it keeps everyone on their toes. Creating that kind of healthy competition within a squad isn't easy, so it's great that we've managed to achieve it."

GAME THEORY

Golf's greats: Major collectors

The second of golf's four Majors, the PGA Championship, teed off on Thursday. Rory McIlroy won the year's first Major, The Masters, at Augusta last month, successfully defending his title. The US Open (Jun 18-21) and The Open (Jul 16-19) will complete the fabled quartet of tournaments over the next two months. We look at the men with the most titles at these prestigious events:

MOST MAJOR TITLES

Golfer	Masters	US Open	The Open	PGA	Total
Jack Nicklaus	6	4	3	5	18
Tiger Woods	5	3	3	4	15
Walter Hagen	0	2	4	5	11
Ben Hogan	2	4	1	2	9
Gary Player	3	1	3	2	9
Tom Watson	2	1	5	0	8
Harry Vardon	0	1	6	0	7
Bobby Jones	0	4	3	0	7
Gene Sarazen	1	2	1	3	7
Sam Snead	3	0	1	3	7
Arnold Palmer	4	1	2	0	7
Lee Trevino	0	2	2	2	6
Nick Faldo	3	0	3	0	6
Phil Mickelson	3	0	1	2	6
Rory McIlroy	2	1	1	2	6
James Braid	0	0	5	0	5
John Henry Taylor	0	0	5	0	5
Byron Nelson	2	1	0	2	5
Peter Thomson	0	0	5	0	5
Seve Ballesteros	2	0	3	0	5
Brooks Koepka	0	2	0	3	5
Tom Morris Sr.	0	0	4	0	4
Tom Morris Jr.	0	0	4	0	4
Willie Park Sr.	0	0	4	0	4
Willie Anderson	0	4	0	0	4
Jim Barnes	0	1	1	2	4
Bobby Locke	0	0	4	0	4
Raymond Floyd	1	1	0	2	4
Ernie Els	0	2	2	0	4
Scottie Scheffler	2	0	1	1	4

JACK NICKLAUS

TIGER WOODS

WALTER HAGEN

BEN HOGAN

GARY PLAYER

SOURCE: MASTERS, US OPEN, THE OPEN, PGA

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

Topsy-turvy

Trick is one of the three primary competitive categories of water skiing; slalom and jump, the others.

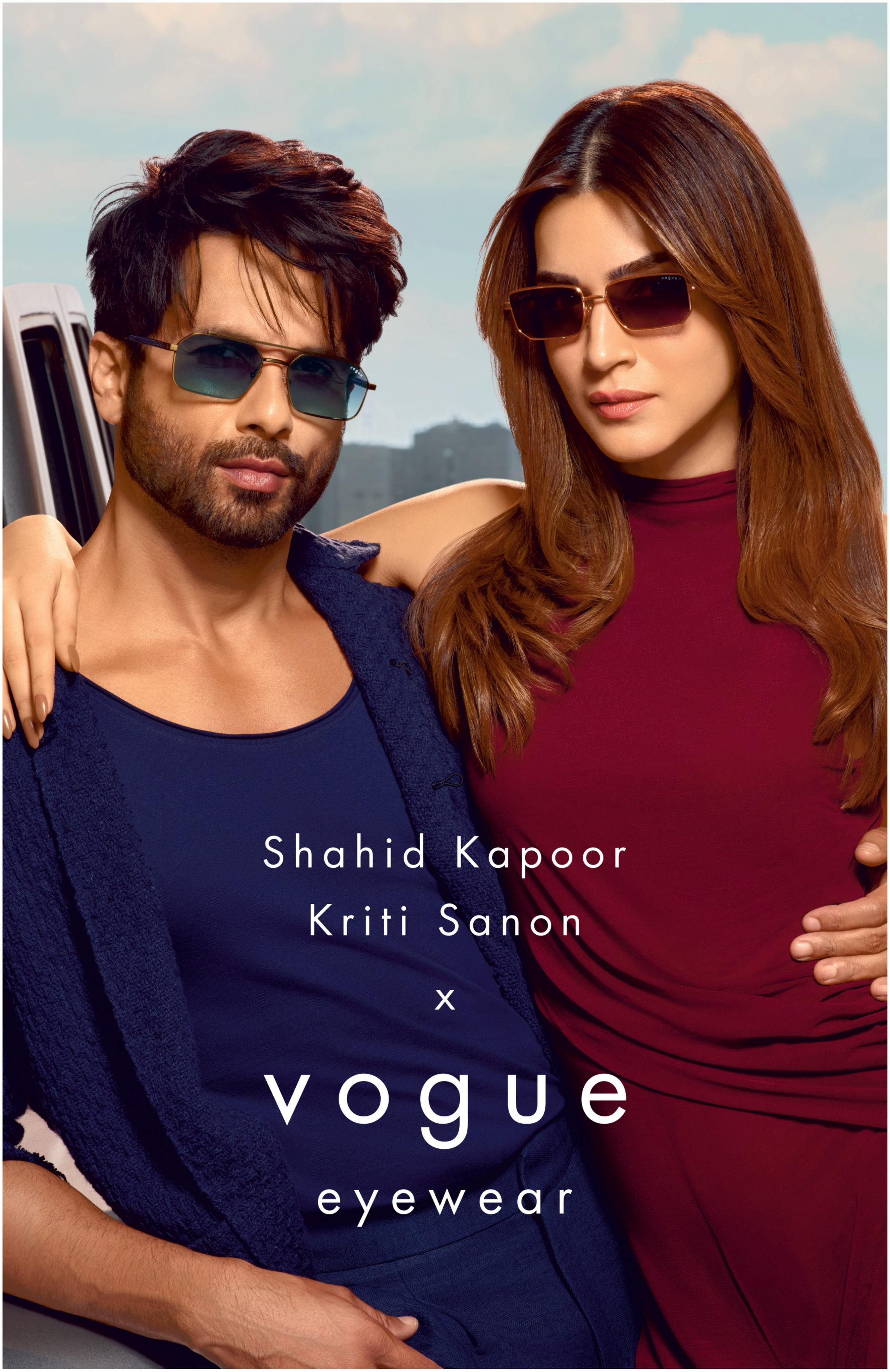
It is the most technical of the three, involving flips, spins and twists. But it is also reportedly the least represented of the three in tournament water skiing.

Water skiing involves athletes, pulled behind a boat or a cable-ski installation, attempting to skim the water surface on skis. In the trick discipline, the skiers have to execute a series of their chosen tricks during runs.

In tournaments, competitors are allocated two 20-second runs. The first pass is for hand tricks, which comprise surface turns, rotations over the wake and flips. The second pass is for toe tricks, in which skiers perform wake turns and rotations with just a foot attached to the handle. A trick cannot be repeated.

This photograph, from the recent Swiss Pro Tricks tournament in Clermont, Florida, shows an athlete in the middle of a hand trick.

Trick skiers use smaller, wider, oval-shaped or oblong skis, which help them perform both surface and air tricks in quick succession.


Shahid Kapoor
Kriti Sanon
x
vogue
eyewear

Shivakumar takes a dig at HDK for criticising Bidadi township project

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Taking a dig at Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy over his criticism of the Bidadi township project, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said criticising the Congress government is essential for JD(S) leader's political survival.

Speaking to reporters here on Friday, Mr. Shivakumar said, "If Mr. Kumaraswamy does not criticise us, he cannot survive politically. We are carrying forward the very project that he had initiated. I will fix a date and time to meet the farmers."

Responding to questions on Mr. Kumaraswamy's criticism of the Bidadi township project, he said, "Farmers may hit me a couple of times, so what? They may tear my clothes, throw stones, or raise slogans against me. Should I be afraid of all that? What matters is their future, their children's future, and the future value of their properties. Maybe not today, but 20 years from now, the people of Bidadi and south Bengaluru will remember me."

Mr. Shivakumar questioned Mr. Kumaraswamy for not de-notifying the land during his tenure as the Chief Minister.

"Couldn't Kumaraswamy himself have de-notified the land for this project? Why didn't he? I am not ready to de-notify it. He knows very well what happened after land was de-notified. Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa too knows, and so do I," he said.

Price rise

Responding to the hike in fuel prices, Mr. Shivakumar said, "Price rise is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's contribution. He has not maintained good relations with other nations."

He alleged that Mr. Modi had failed to handle the international crisis in West Asia properly.

"That is why he is now asking people to save electricity and avoid using petrol. How can people lead their daily lives without fuel? Many may reduce the number of vehicles in their convoy, that is possible. But how can ordinary people stop travelling? People need to travel to earn a living," he said.

On appeals to avoid buying gold for a year, Mr. Shivakumar questioned the practicality of such suggestions.

"Married women need a mangalsutra. In such circumstances, how can people be asked not to buy gold?"

He congratulated V.D. Satheesan for being designated as Chief Minister of Kerala.

"The party high command has given Mr. Satheesan this opportunity. I sincerely wish him well. I thank all the alliance parties. We will work in accordance with the aspirations of the people," he said.

Asked about the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise being undertaken in Karnataka, Mr. Shivakumar said, "The party leaders have been informed. All parties are engaged in this work. BJP, Janata Dal everyone is working to protect their votes."

Corporation conducts 'street-view videography' on footpath conditions

Under the plan, new footpaths will be constructed wherever necessary, while existing ones will be repaired and upgraded

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The North Corporation, which had earmarked ₹935 crore in its maiden budget for a major road and footpath upgrade plan, including the development of 1,000 km of footpaths, asphalting works and white-topping of key arterial roads, has completed 'street-view videography' of footpaths across its jurisdiction to map their current condition and identify missing links. Tenders for maintenance work have also been awarded, with the corporation planning to spend ₹2 lakh or more per km to repair existing footpaths by removing obstructions and constructing missing links. "New footpaths will also be developed, with priority being given to stretches around metro stations, bus stands and underpasses to improve last-mile walkability," North Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar told *The Hindu*. Mr. Kumar said the increased focus on footpaths in this year's budget came after the corporation assessed the poor state of walkability across its limits. The street-view videography was done currently in key areas to help the corporation identify damaged footpaths, encroachments and missing links, he said, adding that the work would be carried out in phases, with priority being given to high-footfall areas. The Commissioner said the findings emerged during the Walkaluru mission. Of this, nearly 50 km was covered within the North Corporation limits. "There is a huge demand for better footpaths, but we found that none of them were free of obstructions. Everywhere there were issues. Electric poles, transformers, encroachments or damage caused by vehicles riding over footpaths. That is why we prioritised this in the budget. The tenders for maintenance have already been awarded," Mr. Kumar said.

Tenders for maintenance work have also been awarded, with the corporation planning to spend ₹2 lakh or more per km to repair existing footpaths.

Under the plan, new footpaths will be constructed wherever necessary, while existing ones will be repaired and upgraded.

BIS seizes gold jewellery worth ₹2.77 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) conducted simultaneous search and seizure operations at two jewellery establishments in Bengaluru on Wednesday and seized gold ornaments weighing 1,618.17 gms, valued at approximately ₹2.77 crore, for alleged violations of hallmarking regulations.

The raids were carried out by the BIS Bengaluru Branch Office at outlets of Panchkesari Badera Jewellers in Jayanagar and Panchkesari Badera Jewellers in Chickpet, as part of an enforcement drive against misuse of BIS standards and hallmarking norms. During the inspection, the officials allegedly found gold ornaments without mandatory Hallmark Unique Identification markings, which is a violation under the BIS Act, 2016. The officials said legal proceedings are being initiated against the establishments concerned.

Consumers have been advised to verify the authenticity of hallmarked gold jewellery using the BIS Care App.

Timings
BENGALURU

SATURDAY, MAY. 16	
RISE 05:54	SET 18:38
RISE 05:03	SET 18:14
SUNDAY, MAY. 17	
RISE 05:54	SET 18:38
RISE 05:58	SET 19:23
MONDAY, MAY. 18	
RISE 05:54	SET 18:38
RISE 07:01	SET 20:31

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	34	22
Bengaluru	31	23

Bengaluru Today
34°C The weather will be warm. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur. Night will be comfortable.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night also will be pleasant. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

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THE HINDU
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Four of family killed after roof collapses

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Four members of a family died when the roof of their house collapsed owing to heavy rain and wind in Moratagi village near Almel in Vijayapura district on Thursday night.

The deceased were identified as Gurunath Badiger, 35, his wife Jyoti Badiger, 28, and their children Kalamma, 13, and Keerthi, 9.

The victims had temporarily shifted to a rented house as they were repairing their residence. All four were trapped under the debris and had no way to escape.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
No. EL-C-JU-RDRA-MJ-26-27-02
E-file No. 276685 Dated: 13.05.2026

Dy.Chief Electrical Engineer (Construction), North-Western Railway, Jodhpur through for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders (Open Tender – Two packet system), for the following work:- **1. Tender No.:** EL-C-JU-RDRA-MJ-26-27-02; **2. Name of the work with its location:** OHE work in connection with New Line Between Ramdevra and Pokhran via Bhairav Gufa-Kailash Tekri & Bypass Line at Marwar of Jodhpur Divison, NWR. **3. Approx. cost of work:** Rs. 102051167.14; **4. Earnest Money to be deposited:** Rs. 2041000.00; **5. Tender Closing date & time:** 12.06.2026 upto 15.00hrs; **6. Detail of particular, where e-tender can be seen & filled up:** www.ireps.gov.in; **7. Official email address:** dyceecju@gmail.com;

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Const.), NWR, Jodhpur
711-PH/26
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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that our client has negotiated with Mr. K.G. Kodandarama, S/o. Late V. Giddana Reddy, aged about 64 years, residing at No. 648, 21st Cross, 23rd Main, HSR Layout, Bengaluru - 560102 to purchase the Schedule Property for valuable consideration. It is represented to our client that Mr. K.G. Kodandarama, S/o. Late V. Giddana Reddy, is the absolute owner of the Schedule Property and he has acquired the Schedule Property under the Sale Deed dated 15th June 2024, Registered on 6th July 2024, registered as document No. HSK-1-06015-2024-25, with the office of the Sub Registrar, Hoskote, executed by Karnataka Housing Board, Kaveri Bhavan. Any person(s) claiming any right, title or interest of whatsoever nature over the Schedule Property is called upon to lodge such claim with the undersigned, with supporting documents within 12 days from the date of this publication. In the event no such claim(s) is received within the stipulated time, it shall be lawful for our client to presume that there are no valid claim(s) adverse to Mr. K.G. Kodandarama's right, title and interest in the Schedule Property and proceeds with the proposed sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Site No. 479 MIG, Property No. 479, E- PID No.150300402000320601, Measuring East to West 15 meters. and North to South 9 meters., totally measuring 135 Sq. meters situated at Bellikere Village, Muthsandra Grama Panchayath, Aanagondanahalli Hobli, Hoskote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, and bounded on the: East by: Site No. 449 & 448 HIG-I, West by: 12.00 Meter Road, North by : Site No.478 MIG, South by : Site No.480 MIG.

M/s. B.M. Associates
Advocates & Consultants
No. 7/1, G.J. Complex, 100 Feet Road, Indirangar 1st Stage, Bangalore-560 038.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No.Y-E-29-2026-27-18
Dated: 08-05-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Description of work	Approx. Value
Provision of Standard Cantilever Arrangement on Platforms in Mysuru and Chitradurga Depots Jurisdiction.	Rs. 49,60,941.92

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 30-05-2026
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer
PUB/112/AAF/PRB/SWR/2026-27 **TRD/Mysuru**
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South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

LOST DOCUMENTS

Public are hereby informed that Mr. **Sagar Chandrakant Pawar,** son of Chandrakant R. Pawar, residing at Unit No. 1032, Tower-1, 3rd Floor, Prestige White Meadows, Sathya Sai Layout, Whitefield, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka – 560066 (hereinafter referred to as the "Deponent"), is the absolute owner and in possession of a registered document namely Deposit of Title Deed dated 19/10/2023 bearing Document No. SHV-1-06700-2023-24, received from State Bank of India, RACPC-II.

The Deponent states that on the same day of registration of the Discharge Deed, the bank officials handed over the original registered document. However, upon verification at his residence, it was noticed that **Page No. 6 of the said document is missing.**

The Deponent believes that the said page might have been misplaced or lost while travelling in an auto-rickshaw after collecting the documents from the registration office. Despite diligent efforts, including searches at all possible locations and enquiries with nearby auto stands and drivers, the missing page could not be traced.

The Deponent further declares that the said missing page has **not been pledged, transferred, assigned, or handed over to any third party,** and the loss is purely accidental.

Any person or entity having found or having any right, title, claim, or interest in respect of the said missing page of the document is hereby required to notify the undersigned with supporting documentary proof within **Ten (10) days** from the date of publication of this notice.

In case no such claim is received within the stipulated period, it shall be presumed that no person has any claim or interest in respect of the said missing page, and the same shall be treated as lost for all legal purposes. Any claims not received within the said period shall be deemed to have been waived.

Any person who finds the said missing page/document is requested to kindly return the same to the Deponent at the above-mentioned address.

Abhishek V.K.
Advocate
No.2 ,11th floor, 1st Cross,
J.C Road, Bangalore-560027
Mob: 9686448292

IN THE COURT OF HON'BLE ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, MAYO HALL UNIT AT BANGALORE (CCH-29)
P & S.C No. 25020 of 2022

BETWEEN: HABEEB KANVI MAQBOOL, Son of Late K.M. Maqbool. Also known as Maqbool Kanvi Mehmood, aged about 46 years, Residing at No. 56, 4th Cross, Seshadri Road, Marappa Garden, Benson Town, Bengaluru-560 046 ... **PETITIONER**

AND: MUJEEB UR REHMAN, Son of Late K.M. Maqbool. Also known as Maqbool Kanvi Mehmood, aged about 51 years, Residing at No. 56, 4th Cross, Seshadri Road, Marappa Garden, Benson Town, Bengaluru-560 046. ... **RESPONDENTS No.1**

LIKITH RAJ KANIVE, Son of Late K.M. Maqbool, Previously known as Maqbool Kanvi Mehmood, aged about 48 years, Residing at No. Flat F2, N.N. Homes, Site No. 5, Behind D.S. Max Splendor Apartments, Kereguddadahalli, Chikkabanavara - 560 090 ... **RESPONDENTS No.2**

COURT NOTICE
NOTICE UNDER ORDER 5 RULE 20 (1) A OF THE CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE CODE, 1908

RESPONDENT No: 2: LIKITH RAJ KANIVE, S/o. Late K.M Maqbool, previously Known as Maqbool Kanvi Mehmood, aged about 50 Years, R/at: No. Flat F2. N.N. Homes, Site.No. 5. Behind D.S Max Splendor Apartments, Kereguddadahalli, Chikkabanavara- 560 090.

WHEREAS, the Petitioner named above has instituted the above suit for the Grant of Succession Certificate of Late Mr. K M MAQBOOL, Deceased on 17.03.2021. In the favour of the petitioner. With respect to the above suit. This Honorable Court has issued service of summons to you through paper publication.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the XXVIII Addl. City Civil and Sessions Judge. Mayo Hall at Bangalore (CCCH No.29) on the **24/06/2026** at **11:00 A.M.** in person or through a pleader, to file any objections to the pleading in the above suit. Failing which, the suit/application will be determined in your absence.

SUIT SCHEDULE PROPERTY
"Bank Accounts and other Deposits"

1. Bank Name: Canara Bank, Branch: Millers Road Branch, Account Number: 0429101016181. Name: Late K.M. Maqbool
2. Bank Name: HDFC Bank, Branch: Nandidurga Road Branch Account Number: 50100002852125 Name: Late K.M. Maqbool
3. Bank Name: Post Office Branch: Benson Town Branch Account Number: 4127615642 Name: Late K.M. Maqbool
4. Bank Name: Post Office Branch: Benson Town Branch Account Number: 4192708447 Name: Late K.M. Maqbool
5. Bank Name: Post Office Branch: Benson Town Branch Account Number: 4487634826 Name: Late K.M. Maqbool
6. Bank Name: Post Office Branch: Benson Town Branch Account Number: 4117943762 Name: Late K.M. Maqbool

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, the Petitioner pray that this Hon'ble Court may be pleased to:

(a) Allow the petition and grant succession certificate of the deceased Late K.M. Maqbool, also known as Maqbool Kanvi Mehmood in favor of the Petitioner and the same to have effect throughout the Union of India, in the interests of justice and equity.

(b) Grant any such other relief/s and or pass any such other orders/ directions as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit in the facts and circumstances of the petition.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this 07/04/2026

By order of the Court, Deputy Registrar, City Civil Court, Mayo Hall Unit, Bengaluru

Advocate for Plaintiff
SREEVATSA ASSOCIATES
No. 50, II Stage, Indiranagar, Bangalore - 560 038.

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF DR. AJAY GULATI DISTRICT JUDGE (COMM COURT)-04, COURT NO. 509, SOUTH-WEST DISTRICT, DWARKA COURTS, NEW DELHI
PUBLICATION NOTICE: DEFENDANT
(Order 5. Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure)
SUIT NO.: CS (COMM)/84/2026
M/S URBO TRANS LOGISTICS PVT LTD V/S ....PLAINTIFF
M/S SHRI KRISHNA ENTERPRISES TO, ...DEFENDANT

M/S SHRI KRISHNA ENTERPRISES THROUGH ITS PROP. MR. VINOD SHUKLA OFFICE AT: FLOOR NO. 1ST FLOOR, BUILDING, FLAT NO. 88, VIKAS NAGAR, 2ND CROSS, NAGASANDRA POST, BANGALORE 560073, KARNATAKA MOB: 9931173614
E-mail id: accounts@srikrishnaenterprise.in
E-mail id: vinodshuklamuz1990@gmail.com
Whereas Plaintiff has instituted the above Commercial Suit for Recovery against the defendant. You are hereby summoned to appear in this Court in person or by a pleader on 02.07.2026 at 10:00 AM, to answer the same, failing which the Suit will be disposed of 'Ex-Parte'. Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this 12th Day of May 2026, to be published in Newspaper "The Hindu"
NOTE:- Defendant is informed to file Written Statement alongwith Statement of Truth and Affidavit of Admission and Denial of Documents within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of Summons with advance copy to the Plaintiff.

Judge District Judge -04 (Commerical Court) South West District, Court Number -509, 5th Floor, District Courts, Dwarka, New Delhi.

SITUATION VACANT

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Uttar Pradesh State Institute of Forensic Science, Lucknow
Aurawan, Daroga Kheda, P.O. Banthra, Lucknow -226401
(Expression of Interest)

UPSIFS, Lucknow (Established in 2021) functioning under the aegis of the Home Department, Govt. of U.P. & affiliated with the National Forensic Science University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. UPSIFS, Lucknow is inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for contractual appointment of Sports Coaches (Male & Female) and Gym Trainers (Male & Female) of the institute. The details of EOI are available on institute website www.upsifs.ac.in The last date for application is June 01, 2026.

UPID RO: 251279
RO Dt: 15/05/2026
Website: www.up.gov.in

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar
UPSIFS, Lucknow

Government of Karnataka
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DIVISION KALABURAGI
No : EE/PRED/KLB/KKRDB /TS/2026-27/455 Date : 14/05/2026

:: TENDER NOTIFICATION – 2ND CALL ::
(Through E-procurement Two Cover System)

1) Name of work: Construction of CC Road and Drain in Madkal village, Improvements to Road from Nala to Dodda Nala at Hayyal village, Improvements of Road to Kyaraghatta Siddeshwar temple at Kontapalli village, Improvements to Road from main road to Nala at Kontapalli village in Sedam Taluka under KKRDB for the year 2025-26 **RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT24437/CALL-2**, 2) Head of account: **KKRDB for the year 2025-26**, 3) Amount put to tender: **Rs. 62,68,354.79**, 4) Class of Contractor: Class- III and Above, 5) Issue of Blank Tender Documents: **14-05-2026 to 29-05-2026 upto 4.00 pm**, 6) Tender Form Fee : As per KPPP Norms, 7) E.M.D. Fee: Rs. 1,25,500.00, 8) Receipt of completed tender documents: **14-05-2026 to 29-05-2026 upto 4.00 pm**, 9) Technical Bid Opening Date: **30-05-2026 After 4.00 pm**, 10) Financial Bid opening Date: **02-06-2026 After 11.00 am,** 11) For more details contact: Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division Opp: Karnataka Grameen Bank (PKGB) Head office, Kusnoor Road, Rajapur Kalaburagi, 12) Website Address: **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division Kalaburagi
DIPR/Kalaburagi/121/KSMC&A/2026-27

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA ENTERPRISE)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KNNL, No4 Canal division, Sirwar. Tq:Dist:Raichur
ಕಸಂ:ಕಾನಿಅ–4/ಕನೀನಿನಿ/ತಾಶಾ/2026–27/120 ದಿನಾಂಕ:12–05–2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-procurement only)

For the year 2025-26 Total four Works from Rs.111.51 Lakhs to 132.00 Lakhs Percentage Tenders for Two Cover System through e-procurement platform are invited by the Executive Engineer, KNNL, No 4 Canal Division, Sirwar on behalf of the Managing director, Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Limited, 4th floor, coffee board building, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar veedhi, Bangalore-01 from eligible registered contractor enrolled in Labour department. Last date for submission of completed tender documents is upto 22.05.2026 upto 04.00 PM. All other details of work and terms and conditions can be obtained through website www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in or in the office of the under signed during office hours.

Corrigendum will be published in website www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in for all modification/corrections, if any.

DIP/RCR/67KSMCA/69/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KNNL, No.4 Canal Division,Sirwar.

POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of the Commissioner of Police
Bengaluru City
NO.COPBCP/EST/EST3(MISC)/34/2023 Dated: 14.05.2026

FILLING UP OF TECHNICAL POSTS IN CYBER CRIME POLICE STATION IN BENGALURU CITY

Applications are invited for the following 11 technical posts to be filled in Cyber Crime Police Station under Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru City, on Contract Basis:

Post	No. of posts
Cyber Security Analyst	8
Digital Forensic Analyst	3

Start date for application submission: **18/05/2026 from10.00 AM**
Last date of application submission: **24/05/2026 by 06:00 PM**
Detailed Recruitment Notification for the above posts is published on the website of Karnataka State Police at **https://ksp.karnataka.gov.in** and the website of Bengaluru city Police at www.bcp.gov.in The applicants may refer to these website for the complete details and may submit their application to this office address: No 01, Infantry Road, Office of The Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru -560001 or via email to **dcpadminbcp@ksp.gov.in.**

Sd/-
President Selection committee and Addl Commissioner of Police (Crime) Bengaluru City
DIPR/CP/681/Zen/2026-27

न्यायालय समाहर्त्ता –सह– जिला दण्डाधिकारी, गया जी
(मद्य–निषेध, उत्पाद एवं निबंधन विभाग)
ज्ञापांक–1252/म०नि०, गया जी,
अतिअल्पकालीन नीलामी सूचना

एतद् द्वारा सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि बिहार राज्य में पूर्ण शराबबंदी के उपरांत शराब के परिवहन में प्रयुक्त वाहनों को समाहर्त्ता–सह–जिला दंडाधिकारी, गया/प्राधिकृत पदाधिकारी, गया द्वारा बिहार मद्यनिषेध एवं उत्पाद अधिनियम 2016 (यथा संशोधित) में निहित प्रावधानों के अधीन अधिहरण न्यायालय से पारित आदेश के आलोक में निम्नांकित वाहनों की नीलामी **"जहाँ है, जैसे है"** के रूप में उप विकास आयुक्त गया की अध्यक्षता में वाहन नीलामी समिति के द्वारा निम्नांकित तिथि/समय से सार्वजनिक आम नीलामी (पाँलिसी एक्ट) जिला परिषद, सभाकक्ष, गया जी में पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे से की जायेगी।

नीलामी में भाग लेने वाले इच्छुक व्यक्तियों को स्तंभ–9 में अंकित मूल्यांकन राशि का 25% प्रतिशत स्तंभ–10 में अंकित राशि अग्रधन के रूप में आवेदन पत्र के साथ बैंक ड्राफट जो Assistant Comissioner of Excise, Gaya के पदनाम से एवं Payable at SBI Main Branch Gaya होगा। विभागीय आदेश 809 पटना दिनांक–03.02.2026 (SOP) एवं विभागीय अधिसूचना संख्या–9059 दिनांक–30.11.2022 के आलोक में निम्नलिखित प्रावधान तथा इस कार्यालय के नीलामी अधिसूचना ज्ञापांक–520 दिनांक–13.02.2026 द्वारा 03 (तीन) बार की नीलामी में शेष बचे वाहनों की नीलामी नहीं होने पर पूर्व के मूल्यांकन से 10% प्रतिशत कम पर स्तंभ– 09 पर अंकित प्रथम नीलामी की जाएगी। तथा प्रथम नीलामी के उपरांत शेष बचे वाहनों की नीलामी के मूल्यांकन को 10–10% (प्रतिशत) कम करते हुए द्वितीय तथा तृतीय नीलामी की जाएगी। सारणी में अंकित सार्वजनिक नीलामी हेतु वाहनों की सूची निम्न प्रकार से है।:–

वाहन की नीलामी की तिथि		आवेदन प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि	आवेदन प्राप्त करने का स्थान
प्रथम नीलामी की तिथि	दिनांक–05.06.2026 समय–11:00 पुर्वाह्न	दिनांक–02.06.2026 समय–05:00 अपराह्न तक	कार्यालय सहायक आयुक्त मद्यनिषेध, गया जी।
द्वितिय नीलामी की तिथि	दिनांक–12.06.2026 समय–11:00 पुर्वाह्न	दिनांक–09.06.2026 समय–05:00 अपराह्न तक	कार्यालय सहायक आयुक्त मद्यनिषेध, गया जी।
तृतिय नीलामी की तिथि	दिनांक–19.06.2026 समय–11:00 पुर्वाह्न	दिनांक–16.06.2026 समय–05:00 अपराह्न तक	कार्यालय सहायक आयुक्त मद्यनिषेध, गया जी।

क्र० सं०	उत्पाद अधिहरण वाद सं०	थाना का नाम	काण्ड सं०/उत्पाद वाद सं०/दिनांक	वाहन का प्रकार	वाहन पंजीकरण सं०	मूल्यांकन समिति का पत्रांक/क्र०	03 नीलामी दिनांक 11.03.2026, 14.03.2026 एवं 18.03.2026 का मूल्यांकन राशि	10% कम मूल्यांकन राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	वाहन मालिक	अभ्युक्ति
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
233	25/23 17.07.2023	वजीरगंज	11/23 06.01.2023	बजाज प्लसर 220 मोटर साईकिल	KA51EZ -1799	Lt. No. 292 Sr. No. 118	23250/-	₹ 20,925.00	₹ 5,231.25	आनन्द प्रभात पिता–जीवन कुमार, Mo.-18/19 FLOT No.-202, MN BTM 2ND STAGE, Dist.-Bangalore,State- Karnataka, Pin Code-560076	

विशेष जानकारी हेतु कार्यालय सहायक आयुक्त मद्यनिषेध, गया जी में किसी भी कार्य दिवस में संपर्क किया जा सकता है।

सहायक आयुक्त मद्यनिषेध, गया

विस्तृत जानकारी **state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar** से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।
PR. No.003296 (Excise) 2026-27

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Metro services on Purple Line to be suspended for two hours tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Metro services on a section of the Purple Line in Bengaluru will remain suspended for two hours on Sunday, due to essential maintenance works being undertaken by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL).

According to a press release issued by the BMRCL on Friday, train services between Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Station (Majestic) and Sir M. Visvesvaraya Station, Central College, on the Purple Line will be affected on Sunday morning. The metro services between Sri Balagangadharanatha Swamiji Station, Hosahalli and Cubbon Park Metro Station will remain stopped from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. to facilitate the maintenance work.

However, the BMRCL stated that metro operations on other stretches would continue as per the regular timetable during the disruption period.

Normal operation

Services will operate normally on the Challaghatta-Vijayanagar, M.G. Road-Whitefield (Kadugodi), Madavara-Silk Institute, and R.V. Road-Bommasandra sections.

The corporation added that normal services across the entire Purple Line, including the affected stretch, would resume from 9 a.m. onwards.

KIA wins big at safety recognition awards

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has bagged the top honours at the Airports' Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific & Middle East Safety Recognition Awards 2026.

The KIA won the diamond award, while the gold and silver went to Chubu Centrair International Airport, Nagoya, Japan and King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia respectively.

The ACI Asia-Pacific & Middle East stated that the 2026 edition of the awards continues to recognise airport operators' efforts in promoting effective safety culture and safety management through innovative and cost-effective solutions. The theme of the year is "Effective implementation of Runway Safety Team".

Safety and efficiency

"Aviation safety and efficiency are the bedrocks of our industry, a safe operation and runway management are equally critical to maintain the trust of travellers, especially in an increasingly complex operating environment. Airports across the region have demonstrated a high standard of leadership and resilience to adapt to the evolving environment. I congratulate the winners for their commitment to safety excellence," Stefano Baronci, Director General of ACI Asia-Pacific & Middle East, said.

'Nanna e-Khata, Nanna hakku' campaign to begin at 52 places today

The initiative is aimed at promoting both issuance of e-Khatas and the conversion of B-Khata to A-Khata, which Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar has been championing

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

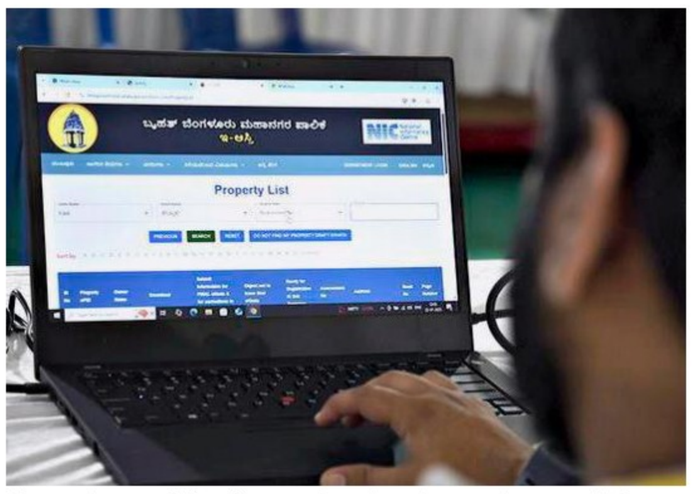
The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) will operationalise e-Khata open houses under the title "Nanna e-Khata, Nanna Hakku" at 52 different locations across the city, covering all five city corporations, from Saturday.

The open houses will function every Saturday, where people can get their khata-related works done. The initiative is aimed at promoting both issuance of e-Khatas and the conversion of B-Khata to A-Khata, which Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has been championing.

The details of the locations where the open houses will be set up can be obtained from the GBA website. The two major services that will be extended at the venues include applying for and obtaining e-Khata, and B to A Khata conversion. At every location, at least 100 people can access the services every Saturday.

Earlier this week, Mr. Shivakumar announced a 60% discount on the B to A khata conversion fee. Originally, the government had fixed the conversion cost at 5% of the guidance value of the area where the plot is located.

However, among the 7 lakh B-Khata properties in the city, a meagre 7,000 applications were received and processed. Against the backdrop of poor public response, the GBA has now rolled out a 100-day window, starting Saturday, during which the conversion cost will be 2% of the guidance value of the area where the plot is located.



The open houses will function every Saturday, where people can get their khata-related works done. FILE PHOTO

The two major services that will be extended at the venues include applying for and obtaining e-Khata, and B to A Khata conversion

As per a government rder dated May 14, the concession will apply only to applications for conversion of B-Khata to A-Khata submitted during the 100-day window.

It will also benefit applicants who had already applied for conversion but are yet to pay the required amount. Such applicants can avail the reduced 2% rate if payment is completed on or before August 23. For these pending cases where payments are pending, but applications are approved, revised demand notices will be generated through the online system.

Past payments in limbo

However, the order does not clarify whether applicants who have already paid the earlier 5% fee will receive any refund or adjustment following the temporary reduction to 2%.

Moreover, the concession will not apply to fresh A-Khata issuance under single-site approvals. In such cases, the existing requirement of paying 5% of the property's guideline value will continue as per prevailing norms, the order said.

Indian gaur operation proves too heavy for forest staff

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The pilot operation to capture and relocate Indian gaurs entered its second day at Koppa Estate, near Koppa in Chikkamagaluru, on Friday. However, the day's operation ended without a capture, after the targeted animal proved too heavy to transport. Forest staff had successfully tranquilised a healthy male gaur using a dart. "We successfully sedated a healthy male gaur. However, it was too heavy, weighing more than 1,000 kg, to be moved. We revived and let it go," said Yashpal Kshirasagar, Conservator of Forests, Chikkamagaluru Circle. He added that the operation aims to develop a Standard Operating Procedure for capturing and relocating gaurs, and will continue on Saturday. The operation would end with the capture of three Indian gaurs. A team of forest officials, field staff, and veterinarians remain camped at Koppa for the operation. The department has been tasked with relocating gaurs on an experimental basis following a spike in human-gaur conflict in the region.

APPOINTMENTS

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY- GURAJADA VIZIANAGARAM
VIZIANAGARAM -535003, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATIONS – 2026

Applications in the prescribed format are invited online for the following cadres for various Departments on direct recruitment basis.

Limited Recruitment Notification for Assistant Professor for SC & BC Backlog Vacancies
(Notification No.1/JNTU-GV/Asst.Prof./SC&BC Backlog/2026 Dt.15.05.2026)

PART-A (SC Backlog)

Cadre	SC-I	Total
Assistant Professor	01	01

PART-B (BC Backlog)

Cadre	BC-B	BC-E	Total
Assistant Professor	01	02	03
Of the above Assistant Professors, Horizontal reservation	1 (women)	--	01 (women)

The detailed information of the above posts relating to qualification, experience, pay scales, reservation, link for submission of filled-in online application etc., can be obtained from the University website: **www.jntugv.edu.in (OR) https://apuniversitiesrecruitment.apcfss.in**
Receiving of online applications will commence from : **18.05.2026**
The Last date for submission of online application is : **08.06.2026 (by 5.00 pm IST).**
The Last date for the submission of hardcopy of application (already submitted online) along with the self-attested relevant documents is : **15.06.2026 (by 5.00 PM IST).**
NOTE: The University reserves the right to fill or not to fill any of the post(s) without giving any reason whatsoever.
Date:15-05-2026 **University Call Center: 7780351078** (Ph No.) from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM
Place:Vizianagaram **Sd/- REGISTRAR**

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY- GURAJADA VIZIANAGARAM
VIZIANAGARAM -535003, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATIONS – 2026

Applications in the prescribed format are invited online for the following cadres for various Departments on direct recruitment basis.

Recruitment Notification for Assistant Professor Regular Vacancies
(Notification No.2/JNTU-GV/Asst.Prof./Regular/2026 Dt.15.05.2026)

Cadre	OC	SC			ST	BC					EWS	Total
		I	II	III		A	B	C	D	E		
Assistant Professor	13	01	02	02	02	03	02	01	01	01	02	30

The detailed information of the above posts relating to qualification, experience, pay scales, reservation, link for submission of filled-in online application etc., can be obtained from the University website: **www.jntugv.edu.in (OR) https://apuniversitiesrecruitment.apcfss.in**
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Along with the self-attested relevant documents is : **15.06.2026 (by 5.00 PM IST).**
NOTE: The University reserves the right to fill or not to fill any of the post(s) without giving any reason whatsoever.
Date:15-05-2026 **University Call Center: 77803 51078** (Ph No.) from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM
Place:Vizianagaram **Sd/- REGISTRAR**

Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University- Gurajada Vizianagaram
VIZIANAGARAM -535003, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATIONS – 2026

Applications in the prescribed format are invited online for the following cadres for various Departments on direct recruitment basis.

Limited Recruitment Notification for Associate Professor for SC & BC Backlog Vacancies
(Notification No.3/JNTU-GV/Assoc.Prof./SC&BC Backlog/2026 Dt.15.05.2026)

PART-A (SC Backlog)

Cadre	SC-I	SC-II	Total
Associate Professor	01	01	02

PART-B (BC Backlog)

Cadre	BC-A	BC-B	BC-D	BC-E	Total
Associate Professor	01	01	01	01	04
Of the above Associate Professor, Horizontal reservation	01 (women)	01 (women)	01 (women)	01 (women)	04 (women)

The detailed information of the above posts relating to qualification, experience, pay scales, reservation, link for submission of filled-in online application etc., can be obtained from the University website: **www.jntugv.edu.in (OR) https://apuniversitiesrecruitment.apcfss.in**
Receiving of online applications will commence from : **18.05.2026**
The Last date for submission of online application is : **08.06.2026 (by 5.00 pm IST).**
The Last date for the submission of hardcopy of application (already submitted online) along with the self-attested relevant documents is : **15.06.2026 (by 5.00 PM IST).**
NOTE: The University reserves the right to fill or not to fill any of the post(s) without giving any reason whatsoever.
Date:15-05-2026 **University Call Center: 7780351078** (Ph No.) from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM
Place:Vizianagaram **Sd/- REGISTRAR**

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY- GURAJADA VIZIANAGARAM
VIZIANAGARAM -535003, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATIONS – 2026

Applications in the prescribed format are invited online for the following cadres for various Departments on direct recruitment basis.

Recruitment Notification for Associate Professor and Professor Regular Vacancies
(Notification No.4/JNTU-GV/ Assoc.Prof.& Professor/Regular/2026 Dt.15.05.2026)

Cadre	OC	SC-I	BC-A	Total
Associate Professor	03	01	01	05
Professor	02	01	--	03

The detailed information of the above posts relating to qualification, experience, pay scales, reservation, link for submission of filled-in online application etc., can be obtained from the University website: **www.jntugv.edu.in (OR) https://apuniversitiesrecruitment.apcfss.in**
Receiving of online applications will commence from : **18.05.2026**
The Last date for submission of online application is : **08.06.2026 (by 5.00 PM IST).**
The Last date for the submission of hardcopy of application (already submitted online)
Along with the self-attested relevant documents is : **15.06.2026 (by 5.00 PM IST).**
NOTE: The University reserves the right to fill or not to fill any of the post(s) without giving any reason whatsoever.
Date:15-05-2026 **University Call Center: 77803 51078** (Ph No.) from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM
Place:Vizianagaram **Sd/- REGISTRAR**

CEO assures safeguards against wrongful deletions during SIR

Notices issued during the process should not be construed as automatic deletion of names from voter list: Anbu Kumar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls set to begin in Karnataka from June 20, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) V. Anbu Kumar on Friday sought to allay concerns over alleged deletion of voters from the electoral rolls.

Addressing presspersons, Mr. Kumar clarified that notices issued during the SIR process should not be construed as automatic deletion of names from the voter list.

"The objective of the exercise is to make the electoral rolls more transparent and error-free, while ensuring that no eligible voter is excluded and no ineligible voter is included. Electors will be given a reasonable opportunity for a hearing before any final decision on deletion is taken," he said.

Elaborating on the process and safeguards being adopted for the revision exercise, he clarified that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will mandatorily visit every household of the State's 5,55,74,064 electors and distribute enumeration forms directly to voters.

Chief Electoral Officer V. Anbu Kumar addressing a media conference regarding the Special Intensive Revision exercise, in Bengaluru on Friday. K. MURALI KUMAR

"The name of every voter who correctly fills and submits the enumeration form will necessarily figure in the draft electoral roll. Notices will be issued only in cases where the information furnished in the form does not match the available data or where technical discrepancies arise. Issuing a notice does not automatically mean deletion of the voter's name," he said.

QR coded forms

Mr. Kumar said QR coded enumeration forms would be distributed in duplicate to every voter. One signed copy would remain with the voter as acknowledgement, while the second copy, after being filled with the required information, would be handed over to the BLO.

"The forms will already contain details such as the voter's name, photograph, polling station number and Assembly constituency. The unique QR code can be scanned through the BLO app to retrieve voter details instantly. If a voter's photograph is outdated, a new photograph can be submitted along with the form. Alternatively, BLOs can capture updated photographs through the app itself," he explained.

Voters whose names appeared in the 2002 electoral roll would be required to provide those details. In the absence of such records, details of relatives such as father or grandfather could be furnished for verification. Of the State's total electorate, around 4,80,39,560 voters have already been mapped, accounting for 86.46% progress in the ongoing verification process.

Mr. Kumar said voters can sign the form or affix their left thumb impression. In cases where the voter is unavailable, an adult family member can sign and hand over the form to the BLO.

"If a voter's name is not found in the 2002 roll or if there is any mismatch in the data, election officials will have to issue notices seeking supporting documents," he explained.

The CEO said documents such as pension identity cards issued by the Centre or State governments, bank or post office records, LIC documents, birth certificates, passports, educational certificates, domicile certificates, forest rights certificates, caste certificates, land or house allotment records and Aadhaar could be produced for verification.

Facilitation centres

To facilitate the process, voter assistance centres would be established at the ward level in gram panchayats and urban local bodies, he said.

Mr. Kumar also said the Election Commission would take all precautionary measures to ensure that no eligible voter is left out during the revision exercise.

Over 64,000 personnel deployed

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Electoral Officer V. Anbu Kumar said the SIR process would involve 31 Deputy Commissioners, 35 Assistant District Election Officers, 224 Electoral Registration Officers, 336 Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, 5,900 BLO supervisors and 59,050 BLOs. Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Panchayats would also participate in the exercise.

In addition, volunteers would be appointed to assist with field-level activities. Proposals had also been submitted to the government for appointment of 16 Electoral Registration Officers and 25 Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, he said.

Some of the Lakkundi artefacts at the National Museum in New Delhi.

After 50 years, State pushes to bring Lakkundi artefacts home

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Nearly 50 years after a rare collection of artefacts from Karnataka's heritage town of Lakkundi was handed over to the Centre, Minister for Tourism H.K. Patil has initiated efforts to bring them back from the National Museum in New Delhi.

The artefacts were formally handed over in October 1976 by D.K. Hebboor and T.K. Nayak to then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, following which they were placed under the National Museum's protected custody.

Mr. Patil said he has begun the process of seeking the return of more than 150 artefacts currently showcased at the National Museum in New Delhi. The move gathered momentum after his recent visit to the National Museum, where he reviewed the collection and held discussions with museum authorities on its preservation, documentation and the possibility of returning it for public exhibition in Karnataka, with Lakkundi itself emerging as the proposed final destination.

The collection includes ancient weapons, gold and silver coins, jewellery, inscriptions and manuscripts linked to the historic town in Gadag district.

Mr. Patil said the government is currently exploring both legal and administrative routes to secure their return. The process is expected to involve consultations with the Union Ministry of Culture, the National Museum administration and the Archaeological Survey of India.

The first stage will involve establishing formal institutional dialogue with the Centre to determine the legal status of the artefacts, verify ownership records and examine archival documents related to their transfer nearly five decades ago. The exercise will also require a review of provisions under antiquities and heritage conservation laws that govern the custody and relocation of protected objects.

From Page One

HC directs Centre to act on Darshan's complaint

The court said that such broadcasts, which "border on trial by headlines", could not be countenanced in a system governed by the rule of law, particularly when they were aired in wilful disobedience of binding injunctions, and in a manner that tended to interfere with the administration of justice, and *prima facie* contempt of court.

The material produced along with the complaint disclosed violations of television programme code, and such broadcast was *per se* illegal, and invited regulatory action under Section 19 and 20 of the CTNR Act, the court stated. The court directed the Ministries to examine the actor's complaint and take action within six weeks by regulating, suspending, prohibiting or directing discontinuance of such telecast, streaming, etc., pending enquiry and final consideration besides asking them to examine the necessity of prohibition of broadcast, suspension or revocation of permissions, or licences, imposition of penalties.

SC flags 'slow' pace of trial in murder case against Darshan

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday expressed disappointment over the "slow" pace of the trial in the 2024 Renukaswamy murder case involving actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, and granted him liberty to renew his plea for bail if there is no "substantial progress" in the case within a year.

A Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Vijay Bishnoi observed that the status report submitted by the trial court in Bengaluru revealed that the prosecution had examined only 10 witnesses over the past seven months, despite proposing to examine nearly 150 witnesses.

"We are of the view that the progress of the trial is extremely slow. At this pace, it is likely to take a considerable time before even the 60 material witnesses are examined. If there is no substantial progress in the trial within one year, it shall be open to the petitioner to once again seek bail before the trial court," the Bench observed.

The top court was hearing Mr. Darshan's plea, contending that the trial was likely to be prolonged and that his continued incarceration would irreversibly affect his livelihood and fundamental right to practise his profession. He also alleged discriminatory treatment in custody, claiming he had been denied basic amenities in violation of prison rules.

The status report submitted by the trial court in Bengaluru revealed that the prosecution had examined only 10 witnesses over the past seven months. FILE PHOTO

Earlier, advocate for the actor had told the Court that the trial was unlikely to conclude soon, stating his bail was cancelled in August 2025 and, by May 2026, only 10 witnesses had been examined out of 150. It was alleged that actor was confined in an isolated quarantine cell for eight months, effectively amounting to prolonged solitary conditions without adequate justification.

However, counsel for the State's prosecution denied isolation claims, saying the cell retained its COVID-19 era microminiature while clarifying that he was allowed to interact with other prisoners, while asserting equal amenities for all undertrials, including Darshan.

The prosecution is intended to complete examination of 60 key-witnesses within a year, the court was informed.

The Bench directed the trial court to ensure that witnesses are examined regularly and proceedings are not adjourned on flimsy grounds, adding that, if necessary, day-to-day hearings may be conducted, while stating it would monitor the trial's progress for one year and may intervene if there is no substantial progress.

As Darshan's advocate told the Bench that the trial judge was holding only additional charge as the regular presiding officer's post had been vacant for six months and in-charge judge could devote just two days weekly. Taking note of this, the Bench directed the Karnataka High Court to examine the issue on its administrative side at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the Bench directed the prison authorities to provide the actor all basic amenities as available to any undertrial, in line with the jail manual while clarifying the Court had last year only ordered against giving any special treatment to him while cancelling his bail.

Many parts of State to receive rainfall over the next few days

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Many parts of Karnataka are expected to receive rainfall over the next couple of days.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) a well-marked low-pressure area over southwest and adjoining west central Bay of Bengal persists over the same region and the associated cyclonic circulation extends upto 5.8 km above mean sea level tilting southwestwards with height.

IMD Scientists C.S. Patil said that due to these factors there will be rainfall across the State.

The forecast said that there will be heavy rain and thundershowers with gusty wind (40 to 50 kmph) at one or two places over Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, Shivamogga, Mysuru, Chamarajanagar districts.

Light to moderate rain/thundershowers with gusty wind (40 to 50 kmph) is likely to occur at a few places over Ballari, Vijayanagara, Davangere, Chitradurga, Tumakuru, Mandya, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Chickballapur and Kolar districts.

In north interior Karnataka, there would be light to moderate rain and thundershowers with gusty wind (40 to 50 kmph) at one or two places over Raichur, Yadgir, Vijayapura, Kalaburagi, Gadag, Koppal, Bagalkot districts.

It added that dry weather is likely in the remaining districts.

DKS celebrates birthday at Tamil Nadu temple

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who celebrated his 64th birthday on Friday, undertook a temple visit in Tamil Nadu.

After priests offered special prayers at his residence on Thursday morning, Mr. Shivakumar, accompanied by his family members, visited the Murugan temple in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu to seek the deity's blessings.

Mr. Shivakumar, who has aspired to become Chief Minister since the Congress victory in the 2023 Assembly elections, has been regularly visiting temples across Karnataka and other parts of the country.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy and Congress leaders celebrate Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's birthday in Bengaluru on Friday.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah extended birthday greetings to his deputy. "Heartiest birthday greetings to the Deputy Chief Minister of the State, dear @DKShivakumar. Your party loyalty and ideological commitment are an example to the youth. I pray to God to grant you long life, good health, and strength to fulfil your desire to serve the people," the Chief Minister posted on X.

In Bengaluru, Belagavi, and several other parts of the State, supporters of Mr. Shivakumar put up banners and hoardings wishing him on his birthday. Some banners in Belagavi described him as the "Next CM of Karnataka". Supporters of Mr. Shivakumar celebrated his birthday by cutting cakes and offering prayers in temples in Ballari and Belagavi.

Responding to the installation of banners, Mr. Shivakumar said: "I had warned that banners should not be put up. Even then, supporters installed them out of admiration. I have personally instructed many people and had the banners removed."

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION
Solid Waste Management Department

SWM.C.No.A7/1630/2025 **E-Tender Notice**

E-Tender is invited by Superintending Engineer (SWM) in Solid Waste Management Department

Operation & Maintenance of Windrow Compost Plant of 50MT capacity (daily waste collection from Zones 9 to 15) in Perungudi Dumping Ground in Zone-14 on contract basis for a period of two year Plant I for an value of Rs.3.86 crores and Plant II for an value of Rs.3.86 crores

Tender submission online last date	18.06.2026 at 3.00 pm
Tender opening date	19.06.2026 at 4.00 pm

Tenderer can view and download the details of E-Tender from website **http://tntenders.gov.in** and may participate in tender EMD Amount 1% should be pay online payment through E- tender portal details given in Tender Document

DIPR/ 1908 /TENDER / 2026 **Superintending Engineer (SWM)**

ADIKAVI NANNAYA UNIVERSITY
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM
CORRIGENDUM

In the recruitment notification No.1 issued by the **Adikavi Nannaya University** and published in **THE HINDU** daily on 15-05-2026 the line "(Notification No.1/AKNU/Associate Professor/Backlog-SC & ST, BC/2026, date.15-05-2026) should be read as "(Notification No.1/AKNU/Assistant Professor/Backlog - SC & ST, BC/2026, date.15-05-2026). **Sd/- Registrar**

Andhra Pradesh State FiberNet Limited APSFL

Proposals are invited from interested agencies for the Request for Proposal for Selection of an Agency for supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Middleware, DRM and allied Software & Hardware for IPTV,OTT, G2C and VAS Service Delivery for APSFL. Details of the RfP and Corrigenda may be downloaded from APSFL website:**www.apsfl.in**

DIPR 5096PP/CL, Dt:15/05/2026

Government of Odisha
Sports & Youth Services Department
Kalinga Stadium, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012
e-mail : deptsportsodisha@gmail.com

Request for Proposal (RFP)

No. PT3-SYS-YS-YS-0017-2026-16676/SYS, dated:15.05.2026

The Sports & Youth Services Department, Government of Odisha invites bids from eligible vendors for supply of **15,000 T-shirts for participants** in connection with the observance of the **State-Level International Day of Yoga (IDY)-2026** scheduled to be held on **21st June 2026** at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar.

The detailed bid document, including eligibility criteria, scope of work, timelines, and terms & conditions, is available on the websites mentioned below :

Website:**https://tendersodisha.gov.in** and **https://sports.odisha.gov.in** .

Interested firms/agencies are advised to study the RFP document carefully before submitting their bid.

Important dates and information:

Date of Publication of RFP	:	15.05.2026
Submission of pre-bid queries	:	21.05.2026
Pre-Bid Meeting	:	22.05.2026
Response to pre-bid queries	:	26.05.2026
Bid Submission starting date	:	27.05.2026
Bid submission last date	:	04.06.2026, 4.00 pm

Sd/-
Additional Secretary

29001/8/2627 OIPR-29001/29001/1/26-27/0006

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M5 ECITY MALL- ELECTRONIC CITY; BHARTIYA CITY MALL- THANISANDRA MAIN ROAD; RMZ GALLERIA MALL- YELAHANKA;
MALL OF ASIA- BELLARY ROAD; FORUM FALCON CITY- KANAKAPURA MAIN ROAD; NEXUS VEGA CITY- BANNERGHATTA ROAD;
MANTRI SQUARE MALL- MALLESHWARAM; GOPALAN SIGNATURE MALL- OMR; PHEONIX MARKET CITY- MAHADEVAPURA;
NEXUS SHANTINIKETAN MALL- WHITEFIELD.

A BG-BGE

What Satheesan's rise means for Cong., IUML and Kerala politics

He is now the unquestionable leader of Kerala Muslims and Christians, around half of State's population, which once drifted away from UDF; at the heart of his popularity is the public notion that he is an uncompromising champion of secularism

NEWS ANALYSIS

Varghese K. George
NEW DELHI

V.D. Satheesan has emerged as the unquestionable leader of Kerala. He has proved that he is no longer dependent on the Congress; it is the Congress that is dependent on him. In the immediate term, this will mean that Congress MLAs and Ministers will have little influence. In the medium term, how his singular command over the mass politics of Kerala will play out will depend on several factors. Street protests for his appointment as Chief Minister suggested that the Congress high command is dependent on Mr. Satheeshan's popularity for its own political standing in Kerala. To be sure, the incoming Chief Minister will continue to swear by the party, but everyone knows who is in control.

It is one thing to say that he is the leader of Malayali masses; but a bit of unpacking of that reveals the community dynamics at play. The Congress suffered in the 2021 Assembly election, among other reasons, due to a rift between the Christians and the Muslims, and within each community. A considerable section of both communities drifted away from the Congress and the UDF, which helped Pinarayi Vijayan win an unusual second consecutive term in the State. Mr. Vijayan's politics catalysed this social dynamic. The Left leader, while undoubtedly secular, catered to Hindu sentiments in this election, even presiding over a state-sponsored congregation of the Sabarimala Ayyappa devotees, while Mr. Satheesan – appointed Leader of Opposition after the UDF loss in 2021 – restored the minorities back to the Congress and UDF, and how.

Former Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan welcomes CM-elect V. D. Satheesan at his residence on Friday. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Reel magic

Mr. Satheesan is now the unquestionable leader of the Kerala Muslims and Christians, who together constitute around half of the State's population. Over the past five years, his carefully crafted political positions – which he can forcefully articulate with clarity and punch – were amplified by an outstanding reel factory that engineered the collective psyche of Kerala, at a scale nobody has achieved in the State's history.

When he took over as LoP in 2021, most observers were sceptical. Unlike K.C. Venugopal and Ramesh Chennithala, and the leaders before them such as K. Karunakaran, A. K. Antony and Oommen Chandy, whose networks spread across the State, Mr. Satheesan's influence was limited to the Ernakulam district. He overcame that limitation through the magic of social media. Even today, he has limited personal connections with party leaders in the State, but he has bonded with the commoners who are now forcing the hands of MLAs and party functionaries to fall in line behind the new Chief Minister-in-waiting.

Mr. Satheesan has established a reputation for diligence in his legislative work and understanding of policy. But that, as in most other places, is not the defining determinant of his popularity. At the heart of his popularity is the public perception that he is an uncompromising champion of secularism, which in turn is achieved largely from his now-predictable open spats with the two caste leaders of the State – Vellappally Natesan of the SNDP, a platform of Ezhavas, and Sukumaran Nair, general secretary of the NSS, a Nair grouping. He framed his confrontation with them as a relentless battle against Hindu communalism, which endeared him to the Christians and Muslims. While confronting these two is a politically rewarding enterprise, Mr. Satheesan – himself a Nair – is not equally strident with regard to minority communalism, which is not in short supply in Kerala. He appears with random Christian pastors whose messaging is rarely inclusive, and went soft on Jamaat-e-Islami – publicly defending the outfit's electoral support for the UDF by arguing that it no longer advocated a theocratic state and that its backing was "purely political". He can easily recite Bible verses and anecdotes from the life of the Prophet Muhammed.

At each step of the way, he never missed an opportunity to establish the point that his positions were purer than those of the Congress, keeping himself on a moral pedestal above the party. He consolidated a consequential voting bloc solidly behind him personally – rather than the party.

It is not only the Congress that is now tasting the consequences, good and bad, of a leader bigger than the party, but key ally, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML). The IUML pressed the Congress for selecting Mr. Satheesan not necessarily because its leaders preferred him, but because its workers rallied behind him. The reporting that the IUML intervened for Mr. Satheesan is only part of the story; the other part is how the IUML's grip on the political attitudes of its own followers may be weakening. What it means for the IUML is that the most popular Muslim leader in Kerala stands outside it. It appears – at least as of now – that Mr. Satheesan has established a direct connect with the Muslim masses of the State, potentially bypassing the IUML. His connect with the public in general is also not necessarily mediated by the Congress. That makes him an unprecedented and unique phenomenon in Kerala politics – the first one to harness the full potential of social media and reel politics. Only the trailer has been released; there is more to be seen.

EC orders probe into voting by foreigners

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Election Commission of India (EC) has ordered a probe into the allegations of foreign nationals casting votes in the recent Assembly election in Tamil Nadu.

A report has been sought from the returning officers of at least two cities and five districts across the State on how the foreigners managed to vote despite the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), official sources said on Friday.

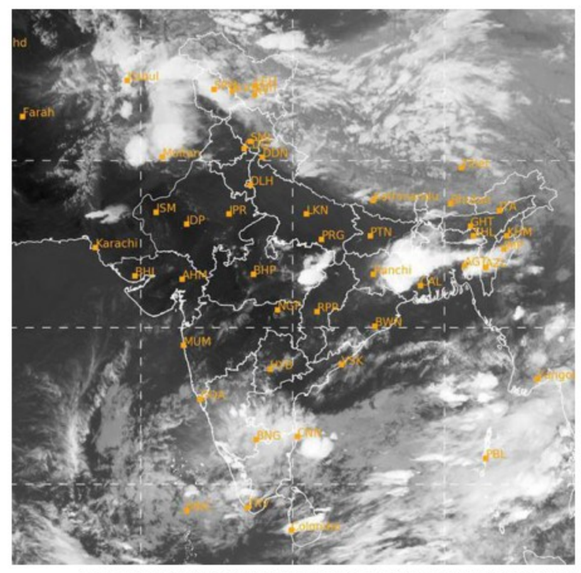
The investigation was launched after many foreign nationals of Indian origin were arrested or detained by law-enforcement agencies in Chennai and Madurai for fraudulently casting votes and immigration officials sent a report to the EC.

Senior officers were inquiring into how the names of foreigners were included in the electoral rolls even after the SIR, a State-wide exercise to revise the rolls through door-to-door enumeration. The exercise was expected to result in the deletion of the names of the deceased, duplicate, permanently shifted and non-citizen voters.

With about 25 foreign nationals belonging to various countries, including Sri Lanka, the U.K. and Canada, being arrested or detained for questioning, the details of foreigners who landed in Tamil Nadu before the April 23 election are being verified to find out whether they had voted.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Saturday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Heat wave conditions likely at isolated places over Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	15	35.3	25.1	Kozhikode	6	35.2	26.7
Ahmedabad	—	41.7	27.6	Kurnool	—	42.0	30.2
Aizawl	—	33.1	23.3	Lucknow	—	37.9	26.9
Allahabad	—	42.8	28.0	Madurai	—	33.5	26.6
Bengaluru	—	30.9	23.2	Mangaluru	3	33.3	24.1
Bhopal	—	42.8	29.8	Mumbai	—	34.2	28.0
Bhubaneswar	—	38.9	26.8	Mysuru	3	34.2	21.0
Chandigarh	—	37.9	24.2	New Delhi	—	39.8	26.2
Chennai	—	33.1	28.9	Patna	—	37.1	26.0
Coimbatore	12	32.0	22.6	Port Blair	12	31.1	24.8
Dehradun	—	35.4	23.4	Puducherry	0.4	27.8	27.6
Gangtok	61	22.5	14.0	Pune	—	38.0	27.0
Goa	—	33.4	26.4	Raipur	—	35.8	27.9
Guwahati	0.3	32.2	23.8	Ranchi	—	32.8	24.0
Hubballi	—	35.0	24.0	Shillong	0.3	24.2	15.0
Hyderabad	—	40.4	28.7	Shimla	—	28.0	18.4
Imphal	6.4	25.1	20.9	Srinagar	—	24.8	11.5
Jaipur	4	39.7	25.1	Thiruvananthapuram	4	31.1	25.0
Kochi	2	31.8	24.8	Tiruchi	—	30.1	27.6
Kohima	—	23.0	16.0	Vijayawada	—	38.8	27.6
Kolkata	—	37.1	27.6	Visakhapatnam	—	35.2	27.7

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.24	.93	43	96	145	
Bengaluru	.20	.30	80	47	103	
Chennai	.6	.12	.—	24	300	
Delhi	.13	104	42	76	172	
Hyderabad	.19	.15	39	100	84	
Kolkata	.13	.25	17	46	57	
Lucknow	.6	.40	48	95	109	
Mumbai	.4	.10	56	23	91	
Pune	.—	.63	90	25	64	
Visakhapatnam	.13	.36	13	20	73	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Churu, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 293 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 14

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
MANGALURU DIVISION MANGALURU
Ref :PWD:MD:TND:(36E/25-26): 2026-27:JE-1 Dated: 14.05.2026

SHORTERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Karnataka Public E-Procurement Portal)/Corrigendum

This office refference Notification No: TND (36E) 2026-27 JE-1: Dated:11.05.2025 for Indent No. 30116 **(Est Amount Rs.400.00 Lakhs). under the Head of Account 5054-04-337-0-01-154 District Roads and Improvements.** date of reciept read as to **29.05.2026 upto 17.00 Hours.** There is no changes is remaining conditions.

Tenders for the above works are invited as per the Standard Tender Document – KW-4. Further details such as value of work, amount put to tender, EMD etc., can be accessed on the KPP Portal at **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Further, for more details can contact O/o, Case Worker, Executive Engineer's Office, PWD, Mangaluru Division, Mangaluru during official working hours. Contact No: 0824-2423169.

DIPR/DK/KSMCA/212/26-27 dt.15.05.2026 **Sd/- Executive Engineer**

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Ayanur Sub Division, Shivamogga
No.: ACF/Tender/CR-01/2026-27 Date: 13.05.2026

Short-Term e-Tender Notice
(Through e-Procurement Portal)

Short-Term Tenders are invited through e-procurement portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 2000 from interested Forest contractors registered in Forest Department as Forest contractors for the year 2026-27 and having experience of growing saplings of various sizes, plantation advance works and having experience of carrying out similar works as put to tender in the Forest Department and having necessary facility for growing of saplings in the limits of the zone where works have to be carried out for implementation of "Formation of Plantation, Maintenance of Plantation and Maintenance of Saplings of various sizes " in the limits of various Forest Zones of Shivamogga Regional Forest Division including Change of places of work implementation mentioned in e-procurement portal under various Head of Account based on expected Grant for the year 2026-27. Last date for submission of Tenders is fixed as: 20.05.2026 up to 4.00 PM. For further information this office can be contacted during office hours and details of the Tender can be obtained through the official website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

DIPR/smg/ksmca/26-27/60/05/228 **Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, Ayanur Sub Division, Shivamogga**

RE-NOTIFICATION
APPOINTMENT OF SOCIAL AUDIT DIRECTOR

Applications are hereby re-invited for the post of Social Audit Director in the Social Audit Unit of the State. For more details, please log on to **www.nregs.kerala.gov.in**, **www.kerala.gov.in**, **www.lsgkerala.gov.in**. The last date for receiving applications for the appointment of Social Audit Director is **26.05.2026**, before **5:00 PM**. Contact Phone Number. **0471 2313385**.

Candidates who have already applied pursuant to the earlier notification dated 09.02.2026 need not apply again.

D3/310/2026/I&PRD

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD
Jalabhavana, 5th Floor, No.5, 1st Stage, 1st Phase, BTM layout, Bannerughatta Main Road, Bengaluru-560029

CORRIGENDUM

No: KWB/TEC/CE(B)/CHAN-UGD/TENDER/188/2026-27 Dated: 14.05.2026

Name of the Work:- Providing 2nd stage UGD Scheme to Channapatna City including Operation & Maintenance for a period of 5 years (including 1 Year DLP) through Design, Build Operation and Transfer (DBOT) mode with JV.

Indent No.: KUWSDB/2026-27/WS/Work_INDENT502

Further details may be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Chief Engineer, KUWS & D Board, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/685/CCL/2026-27

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PWD Ramanagara Division, Bengaluru South Dist.

Tender Notification No. : 02/2026-27 Date : 15-05-2026

SHORT TERM RE-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Short Term Re-Tenders invited from qualified contractors for the works through KPPP Portal as per **Standard Bid Documents.** The eligible Contractors can participate in this Tender through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Documents may be Downloaded from : 15-05-2026 & Last Date for Submission of Tender : 22-05-2026 upto 16.00 hours, Date of Opening of Technical Bid : 25-05-2026 at 11.00 hours. (If possible) Tender Processing Fees and E.M.D. as per KPP Portal No. of Works 01, Estimate Cost Rs. 72.00 Lakhs.

For more information contact the above Office during Office Hours.

Note : Here after any changes with reference to this Notification will be Notified in KPP Portal only.

DIPR/Ramanagar/55/Manipal/2026-27 **Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, Ramanagara Division, Bengaluru South Dist.**

Government of Karnataka
DIRECTORATE OF URBAN LAND TRANSPORT URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER URBAN LAND TRANSPORT
BMTC, TTMC 'B' Block, (Above Bus Stand), 4th Floor, K.H.Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027. Ph : 080-22226627 / 6628, Fax : 080-22226630, E-Mail : dultbangalore@gmail.com, dult@karnataka.gov.in

DULT/4/2026 Dated 15.05.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) has extended the bid submission date for the preparation of road inventory and mobility plans across the Belagavi, Bengaluru, Kalaburagi, and Mysuru divisions. Reputed consultancy service providers can now submit their bids till **22.05.2026, 5:30 PM.** Tender documents are available for download on the Government of Karnataka portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Tender Number are as follows:

Belagavi Division	-	DULT/2026-27/SE0045
Bengaluru Division	-	DULT/2026-27/SE0046
Kalaburagi Division	-	DULT/2026-27/SE0047
Mysuru Division	-	DULT/2026-27/SE0048

DIPR/CP/687/SHIRDI SAI/2026-27 **Sd/- Joint Director (Admin) Directorate of Urban Land Transport Urban Development Department**

ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ.
ಐ.ಎಸ್.ಆರ್ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಚಿತ್ತವಾಡ್ಗಿ ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ–583 201,
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08394–227749
E-mail:hospethuda@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಹೊನಅಪ್ರಾ/ಎ1/ಮ.ಯೋ(ಪ–2)/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ:14.05.2026.

CORRIGENDUM

As per Karnataka Public Procurement Transperancy Act 1999-2000 Preparation of Master Plan (R-2) for the Local Planning Area of hospet has been invited through E-Procurement indent no- HUDA/2025-26/SE0009/CALL-2 Dated 28.4.2026. Corrigendum has been issued for Rectification in the bid document as under

Sl.no	As per bid document	Rectification
1.	254.24(Revised 432.14) Sq.m	254.55 Sq.km
2.	EMD amount RS. 2,47,500/-	EMD amount RS 2,40,000/-
3.	HUDA/2025-26/SE0015/CALL-2	HUDA/2025-26/SE0009/CALL-2

Sd/- Commissioner
Hospet Urban Deelopment Authority Hospet
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/78

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal only)

No.: CEE/ BGKT/Tr.(Op)Z//SEE(O)/AEE-3/2026-27/3168-72 Date: 14.05.2026

KPTCL invites Tender for following Services required for Transmission(Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Bagalkote.

Tender Enquiry No: **KPTCL/2025-26/SE2306/CALL-3,** for Services for carrying out Routine Preventive Maintenance and Breakdown Maintenance works of 220kV Nagazhari-Kodasalli-Kaiga-Kadra Transmission Lines owned by KPTCL in the jurisdiction of Transmission(Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Bagalkote in the State of Karnataka for Contract period of Three (03) years. Quantity: **1 no.**

The tender will be received through "KPP Portal" only. The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the e-Procurement Portal can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL Website: **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **"E Procurement KPTCL"** or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after Date: **16.05.2026, 04.00 pm** onwards. Last date for receipt of tender is on or before: **30.05.2026 up to 05.30 pm.** Further details can be had from the office of the under signed during office hours.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Elec.), Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Opp. to Sector No. 45,Navanagara, Bagalkot - 587 103.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ, ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡ
ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 08382–220556 ಇ–ಮೇಲ್: predkarwar@gmail.com
ಕ್ರಸಂ: ಪಂರಾ.ಇಂ/ಕಾ/ಪಿಬಿ–1/2026–27/07 ದಿ: 13.05.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ–07/2026–27 (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಾರವಾರ ಇವರಿಂದ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಿದ ಅರ್ಹ ಹಾಗೂ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ 5054 ಲೆಕ್ಕಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆಯಡಿಯ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಖರೀದಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಕಾನೂನು ಹಾಗೂ ನಿಯಮಾವಳಿ 2000 ಹಾಗೂ Standard Tender Document ನ K.W-4 ರ ತತ್ಸಂಬಂಧ ಕಾಲಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊರಡಿಸಲಾದ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ ಆದೇಶಗಳನ್ವಯ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ–ಆಡಳಿತ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಥವಾ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದಂತೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಇನ್ನುಳಿದ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಖಚಿತಪಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿವರಗಳು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತಿವೆ.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು: 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ 5054 ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಕುಮಟಾ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಗೋಕರ್ಣದ ಮಾರುತಿಕಟ್ಟೆಯಿಂದ ಅಹಲ್ಯಾಬಾಯಿ ಛತ್ರದವರೆಗೂ ಡಾಂಬರೀಕರಣ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ. **RDPR/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT26366,** ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 110.91 ಲಕ್ಷ, ಮುಂಗಡ ಠೇವಣಿ ರೂ. 200000.00, ಕಾಲಮಿತಿ (ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸಹಿತ): 06 ತಿಂಗಳು

(1) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಶೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್–ಬಿಗಳನ್ನು ಮತ್ತು Technical Bid ನ್ನು ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ತುಂಬಿ ಮರಳಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 29.05.2026 ರ ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ 16.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ. (2) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ Technical Bid ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 30.05.2026 ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ 16.31 ಘಂಟೆಗೆ. (3) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ತಾಂತ್ರೀಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾದ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಗೆ ನಂತರದಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/129/26-27 dt. 14.05.2026 ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರು, ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ

ನೃಪತುಂಗ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
(NAAC A+ ಮಾನ್ಯತೆ ಪಡೆದ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ)
NRUPATHUNGA UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU
(NAAC A+ Accredited Institution)
ನೃಪತುಂಗ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು – 560001. E-mail: nrupathungauniversity@gmail.com, Ph : 080-22212924

No:NUB/RA/Conavocation/63/2026-27 Date : 15.05.2026

Notification

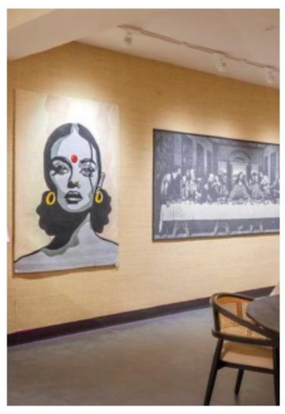
It is hereby notified that the 2nd & 3rd Annual Convocation Of the Nrupathunga University, Bengaluru is scheduled to be held on Tuesday the **2nd June 2026 at 11.30 AM** in the **Jnana Jyothi Auditorium,** Palace Road, Central College campus, Bengaluru City University, Bengaluru-560001. **Shri.Thaawar Chand Gehlot,** Hon'ble Governor Of Karnataka and Chancellor of Nrupthunga University will preside Over the Convocation. **"Prof. H.S. Raghavendra Rao,** renowned scholar and thinker, will arrive as the chief guest and deliver the convocation Address. **Dr.M.C. Sudhakar,** Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education, Government of Karnataka and Pro-Chancellor, Nrupathunga University will grace the Convocation. **"Prof. Mohan Kumar B.K,** Vice chancellor, Nrupathunga University will present a brief report of activities of the University.

DIPR/CP/690/SHIRDI SAI/2026-27 **Sg/- Registrar (Administration)**

PROPERTYPLUS
HOMES AND REAL ESTATE NEWS | THE HINDU
thehindu.com/features/homes-and-gardens

From Kerala to the MET Gala

109-year-old Cherthala-based atelier Neytt Homes has opened a 4,000-sq.ft. experiential store in New Delhi, blending sculptural interiors, storytelling and custom rug design



Anisha Menezes

The MET Gala lights up the news cycle with high fashion and art each May. But the quiet hero at the uber glamorous event is the carpet rolled onto the steps of Fifth Avenue in NYC. Over the last four years, Kerala's Neytt Homes, a Cherthala-based rug atelier, has crafted the carpet at the prestigious MET Gala. Neytt's legacy spans over 109 years.

This year, they have more to celebrate with the opening of the brand's first flagship outlet in North India, 4,000 sq. ft. in size, and only its second in the country. For Sivan Santhosh, founder and CEO of Neytt Homes, and his partner and wife Nimisha Srinivas, the MET Gala carpet generates quite a buzz each May.

"Nimisha and I wanted to create a space where every rug is made visible, so we visited other rug stores in Sultanpur to see what they offered. Most resembled warehouses, where rugs were stacked. We wanted to create a gallery-like setting where rugs were displayed on walls, and you could discover something new around each corner," explains Santhosh.

The store is divided into three areas: publication, know your rug, and a design studio.

The publication wall celebrates Neytt's international footprint, from the MET Gala carpets to hand-woven pieces in the White House lawn. Each rug is accompanied by storytelling around its ideation, provenance and process. "We have a coffee table-style book revisiting our history and detailing our material and design philosophy. There is a write-up with an art installation of the transition from fibre to rug, as well. We take just four to five appointments per day and a few walk-ins to allow for a slow exploratory experience," states Santhosh.

"We have introduced automation and tuning of lights to allow designers to personalise the lights from warm to cool tones, so customers can mimic the lighting in their homes as they choose a rug," says Rahul Mathew, founder of Workers of Art, and the designer of the store.

The design lab is a DIY area where in-house designers use software and four moodboards: minimalist, maximalist, traditional, and colourful, along with weaving, material and dyeing techniques. Customers can see mock-ups of customised rugs on a projected screen.

Sustainability and deep cultural roots are embedded across the store. The design lab has lamps woven by Sirohi (women's SHG) weavers using leftover yarn from the store. "We innovate with new sustainable fibres created from recycled PET and Econyl (upcycled from discarded fishing nets and nylon fabric) and offer to buy back rugs from hospitality establishments so we can completely regenerate it into raw nylon and refashion it into a new carpet," says Santhosh.

As Neytt sets its sights on a pan-India footprint, this flagship experiential store has brought in visibility and avenues for collaboration. "It's important to have a presence in the right place at the right time. We have one international and one Indian collaboration coming up (details to be announced soon), as a result. In the store, we want visitors to explore the space with a touch of whimsy, so we encourage you to get creative with your rug experience," concludes Santhosh.

The writer is based in Chennai.

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Juggernaut rolls on

Anomalies of Phase 2 of SIR demand a fresh approach from the ECI in Phase 3

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced a third phase of its controversial Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, covering 16 States and three Union Territories with a combined electorate of 36.73 crore. Given what transpired in Phase 2 – a staggering net trim of 10.2% in the rolls – it would be prudent for the ECI to make structural changes in how it conducts this third phase, so that the disenfranchisement visible particularly in States such as West Bengal is not repeated. At least, the exercise will not be hurried through because of an impending election. The SIR has produced mass deletions of varying scale across States, with West Bengal's the most egregious. This was the cumulative result of the ECI's reliance on faulty software, arbitrary criteria, and methodological flaws, which together led to the removal of a disproportionately higher number of electors from marginalised and minority communities, most notably in West Bengal. Across States, the SIR was marked by the centralisation of data and decision-making in ECI authorities in New Delhi rather than with empowered Electoral Registration Officers in the States; by booth rationalisation conducted in parallel with enumeration rather than after it, which obscured the scale of deletions and made it harder for electors to verify their inclusion; and by software errors that deleted entire sets of duplicate names rather than only the excess entries. Most fundamental of all is the design of the enumeration process itself, which places the onus on electors rather than on ECI officials to establish eligibility on the rolls. The aggregate result of these flaws is visible in the data: gender-ratio drops in the electorate across nearly every State where the SIR was conducted – Tamil Nadu being the notable exception – and mismatches with officially estimated elector-population ratios.

Yet, none of this has moved the ECI to change course. That the lessons of Bihar were not absorbed in Phase 2 itself raises the suspicion that the insouciance is by design. Worryingly, the Supreme Court of India has chosen managerial supervision over adjudication, directing the acceptance of more identity documents, deploying judicial officers, even as the underlying questions on Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act and on the shifting of the burden of proof to electors remain unresolved. As Phase 3 commences, the burden now falls on political parties and civil society to sensitise electors to ensure that their enumeration forms are properly processed. The ECI should prioritise universal adult franchise over a method that places the onus of remaining on the rolls upon electors themselves.

Superpower summit

As the U.S., China renegotiate ties, India must reinforce its strategic autonomy

As U.S. President Donald Trump left Beijing on Friday after two days of talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping, the world's two biggest powers appeared to have come to a temporary truce. How long it will last remains to be seen, given that the summit concluded without any apparent breakthroughs in the long list of differences, from trade to Taiwan, that have strained relations. Instead, both sides appear focused on injecting some stability into a relationship that has, of late, seen many ups-and-downs. Mr. Xi offered a new label for ties, calling for "a constructive relationship of strategic stability" for the remaining years of Mr. Trump's term and beyond. If both agree on the need for some stability, their priorities appear to differ. Mr. Xi told Mr. Trump that Taiwan was the most important issue in the relationship, which could descend into conflict if not properly managed. The U.S. stance on Taiwan remains unchanged, which includes substantial arms sales. How this détente will handle the Trump administration's next sale remains to be seen. For Mr. Trump, getting China to buy more American goods and relax controls on rare earths are key metrics of the health of ties. He said that Beijing had agreed to buy 200 Boeing aircraft, step up purchases of soyabean, and relax restrictions on U.S. beef exports - the "three Bs" he has emphasised. The U.S. has also allowed 10 Chinese firms to resume purchases of advanced Nvidia chips. Both sides have discussed setting up a Board of Trade to manage trade issues, including reducing tariffs on some Chinese goods, and a Board of Investment to green light Chinese investment in non-sensitive sectors.

These deals, if confirmed, may at most lead to a pause in a bruising trade war. However, the Beijing summit has also served as a reminder of the broader changing structural dynamics in relations between the world's two biggest powers. If the U.S. remains the pre-eminent military power today, it is the limits of its ability to command global influence that have come into question increasingly, all the more so after the Iran war. China, for its part, has made clear it is no longer interested in biding its time or hiding its global ambitions. As Mr. Xi put it to Mr. Trump, can China and the U.S. avoid the Thucydides Trap, of an inevitable conflict between the established power and the rising power, and create a new model of relations? This question holds significance for India and the rest of the world, which have to navigate this rivalry. Standing up to U.S. pressure, while managing difficult relations with an increasingly confident China, will be two key tests of India's diplomacy in the years to come. Reinforcing India's strategic autonomy and independence, rather than diluting it, will offer the best path forward.

Trade, supply chains and economic statecraft

Shashi Tharoor

Fourth-term Member of Parliament (Congress party, Lok Sabha) for Thiruvananthapuram, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning author of 29 books, including 'Pax Indica' (2012) and 'The New World Disorder' (2020)

The past decade has collapsed the old boundary between economics and geopolitics, creating a world in which supply chains, trade routes, energy corridors and technology ecosystems have become the real battlegrounds of power. What once belonged to corporate strategy decks is now the daily fare of national security briefings. Tariffs behave like sanctions, semiconductor alliances resemble defence pacts, and the flow of critical minerals can tilt influence as decisively as troop deployments once did. In this new order, states compete not only with armies or ideologies but with regulatory regimes, infrastructure networks and the capacity to anchor global production. The fusion of markets and statecraft is no longer a trend; it is the organising principle of 21st century geopolitics.

Trade as strategic leverage

This shift has also exposed the fragility of the older globalisation consensus – the belief that trade naturally fosters cooperation and shared prosperity. Increasingly, economic ties are being repurposed as instruments of strategic leverage. Tariffs, export controls, supply-chain restrictions and energy dependencies have become tools through which states attempt to shape the behaviour of others. The scramble over critical minerals, the weaponisation of interdependence (with China's curbs on the export of rare earths allowing it to flex its muscles against the United States and India), and the resurgence of tariff politics (used by U.S. President Donald Trump to punitive effect) all underscore how easily commerce can be turned into coercion. In such an environment, economic diplomacy is inseparable from national security, and countries must navigate a world where prosperity and power are intertwined.

For India, this shift has encouraged a more pragmatic approach to foreign policy, one that places greater emphasis on economic resilience and diversification. This fusion of economics and geopolitics has created a rare moment in which India's structural strengths align with the world's strategic needs. As companies and governments rethink their exposure to concentrated supply chains, India's scale, stability and reform trajectory have moved it from the periphery of globalisation to the centre of boardroom strategies and diplomatic calculations. A country once viewed in the West as a promising but difficult market is now seen as an indispensable node in a diversified global economy – large enough to matter, stable enough to trust, and open enough to absorb investment at scale.

Three shifts underpin this new positioning. First, India's domestic reforms – digitisation, infrastructure expansion, and targeted deregulation – have lowered transaction costs and improved predictability, making it easier for global firms to build long-term capacity.

The new global order offers India unprecedented strategic and economic opportunities, making a case for balanced 'policy promiscuity'

Second, the geopolitical recalibration around China has created a structural demand for alternative production ecosystems, and India is one of the few economies with the labour force, political stability and market depth to meet that demand.

Third, India's own strategic imagination has expanded: it now sees trade agreements, technology partnerships and supply-chain diplomacy not as peripheral to national strategy but as central instruments of statecraft.

The new order and India

In this environment, India's relationships with major powers are increasingly shaped by economic security rather than traditional geopolitics alone. Semiconductor collaborations, critical-mineral partnerships, defence-industrial co-production and digital-public-infrastructure exports are all examples of how India is weaving economic resilience into its foreign policy. These are not merely commercial arrangements; they are strategic bets on a world where influence flows through production networks as much as through military alliances. It is a world where Pax Silica complements Pax Americana, but unlike the latter, does not require a military partnership.

At the same time, India must navigate the risks of this new order. Interdependence can empower, but it can also expose. Over-reliance on any single partner – whether for technology, minerals, or markets – creates vulnerabilities that can be exploited. The challenge is to build a diversified portfolio of economic relationships that enhances India's autonomy rather than constraining it. Promiscuity is not a virtue in inter-personal relationships, but in the trade world of the third decade of the 21st century, it may be the only viable "default mode" for India's conduct. Of course, like the other kind, trade promiscuity also requires precautions. Even as it pursues multiple partners, India must strike a careful balance: deepening integration without surrendering strategic space, attracting investment without becoming dependent on it, and embracing globalisation without repeating the mistakes of earlier eras. This global shift also places new demands on India's internal economic strategy. To anchor global supply chains, India must continue improving logistics, regulatory clarity and workforce skills. To lead in emerging technologies, it must invest in research, intellectual property and trusted digital infrastructure. To secure critical minerals, it must build resilient partnerships abroad and sustainable extraction policies at home. And to maintain credibility as a democratic alternative in a world of authoritarian efficiency, it must ensure that economic growth is matched by institutional strength and social cohesion.

The stakes are high because the opportunity is historic. For the first time since liberalisation, the global economy is not merely inviting India to participate – it is actively seeking India's presence. The question is whether India can convert this moment of geopolitical demand into long-term economic capability.

As the global trading system fragments into overlapping coalitions and custom-tailored economic arrangements, India's task is not to retreat behind new walls but to remain confidently open on its own terms. The goal is neither complete individualism nor naive globalism, but a calibrated integration that avoids excessive dependence on any single partner. Serial dating works best when each partner is aware of your other relationships, knows multiple options exist but is not threatened by any of them. This is why energy security, technology partnerships and resilient supply chains have become central to India's external engagement: they are the arenas in which the next phase of global competition will be decided.

Economic diplomacy is no longer an adjunct to foreign policy; it is one of its organising principles. Countries that can align their economic strategy with their diplomatic posture will shape the emerging order rather than be shaped by it.

This moment also coincides with a profound transition in the architecture of global trade. The multilateralism that defined the late 20th century – rooted in universal rules and broad consensus – has lost momentum under the weight of geopolitical rivalry and domestic political pressures. In its place, nations are turning to flexible bilateral and regional arrangements that allow them to tailor partnerships to strategic priorities. For India, this shift is not a setback but an opening. It creates space for a more agile, interest-driven diplomacy that can leverage India's scale, stability, and reform trajectory to build coalitions across geographies and sectors.

India at global crossroads

The convergence of these trends places India at a pivotal juncture. The world is searching for diversified production bases, trusted digital ecosystems and stable democratic partners. India can meet that demand – but only if it continues to invest in competitiveness at home and credibility abroad. The choices made now will determine whether India becomes a central anchor of the new global economy or remains merely one of its many participants. The opportunity is historic, but it is not automatic. It requires clarity of purpose, institutional steadiness and the confidence to engage the world without fear or favour.

In a world where prosperity and power now move through supply chains rather than shipping lanes, India's future will be shaped not by choosing between globalisation and self-reliance, but by mastering the art of engaging the world on terms that protect its autonomy while amplifying its ambition.

Productivity, not just growth, for Viksit Bharat

Saumitra Bhaduri

Professor at the Madras School of Economics

India's recent economic performance has been strong enough to inspire confidence. Over the past decade, and particularly in the post-COVID-19 pandemic period, India has combined relatively high growth with macroeconomic stability in a way that few large economies have managed. Real GDP growth has remained robust, reaching 6.5% in FY2024-25, making India one of the fastest-growing major economies globally. This performance has been underpinned by strong domestic demand, subdued inflation, gradual fiscal consolidation, and a broadly stable financial sector.

While India's productivity growth has been meaningful over recent decades, sustaining high growth will require acceleration, particularly as India aspires to become Viksit Bharat by 2047. That transition will require not just maintaining macroeconomic stability but also activating all engines of growth, labour, capital, and improved productivity, through deeper structural reforms.

Manufacturing without depth

There is now growing recognition, reflected in the Economic Survey 2025-26, that manufacturing must anchor this next phase. The challenge, however, is not just expanding manufacturing, but also making it more productive. India's structural transformation has been skewed. While services have driven growth, manufacturing has not expanded sufficiently to absorb labour or generate broad-based productivity gains. In most successful development experiences, manufacturing acts as the bridge between low-productivity agriculture and high-productivity modern sectors.

The Economic Survey reinforces this point, emphasising that manufacturing is central to sustaining growth and generating employment at scale. Without it, India risks a growth pattern that is neither sufficiently robust nor structurally stable. While productivity growth in services has been strong, manufacturing productivity has lagged behind both its potential and that of its international peers. A key issue is firm structure. India's manufacturing sector is characterised by a large number of small, low-productivity firms and relatively few mid-sized firms capable of scaling up. This is in stark contrast to economies that successfully industrialised, particularly in East Asia, which saw the emergence of a strong cohort of medium and large firms that drove exports and productivity growth.

India must unlock productivity to sustain long-term economic growth

Therefore, the current structure creates a challenge for efficient factor allocation, leading to a significant share of labour remaining in agriculture, where productivity is far lower than in manufacturing and services. Most importantly, despite significant investment – particularly in infrastructure – efficiency gaps remain.

Zombie firms, stalled reallocation

These structural constraints converge into a deeper problem, reflected in a weak business dynamism. In economic theory, productivity growth is often driven by creative destruction, in which new, more efficient firms replace older, less productive ones. In practice, this process remains slow in India. As a result, the persistence of small, low-productivity "zombie" firms impedes the efficient reallocation of resources. Zombie firms that are no longer economically viable but continue to operate nonetheless tie up capital and labour that could otherwise be deployed in more productive uses.

Evidence from recent studies further reinforces this concern. A paper, "Zombie Firms in Emerging Markets: Survival and Funding Mechanisms" (2025), shows that while zombie firms constitute a relatively small share of firms, they account for a disproportionately large share of total debt and assets. This implies that a significant volume of capital is locked into low-productivity uses, creating systemic inefficiencies. The research also shows that zombification is a gradual process. Financial deterioration begins well before firms are classified as zombies, and once they enter this state, they become increasingly dependent on debt while showing little recovery in core performance indicators. The problem is persistent, not cyclical. Crucially, the nature of financing matters. Bank-financed firms are more likely to become zombies, remain in distress for longer periods, and relapse even after partial recovery. In contrast, equity-financed firms are less prone to zombification and more likely to recover sustainably.

These findings point to a deeper institutional issue. Financial and regulatory structures often sustain inefficient firms rather than facilitating exit. This weakens reallocation by crowding out credit from more productive firms, thereby undermining overall productivity growth.

Two-pronged strategy

India's path to Viksit Bharat requires a manufacturing-led strategy that addresses both scale and efficiency. India has demonstrated that it can grow rapidly. The next phase is about ensuring that this growth translates into sustained increases in productivity and income. There is growing recognition that manufacturing is the weak link in India's development story and that expanding manufacturing will require deeper integration into global value chains, managing trade barriers, and continued infrastructure investment. Equally important is improving productivity through stronger business dynamism and productive research and development. This means enabling firms to grow, but also allowing inefficient firms to exit. Reforms must therefore focus on simplifying regulations, easing labour constraints, strengthening insolvency processes, improving credit allocation, and expanding access to financing.

The vision of Viksit Bharat ultimately depends on whether India can complete this transition. Growth has laid the foundation, but enhanced productivity and the exit of inefficient firms will determine whether it can sustain the leap to Viksit Bharat.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Burden of fuel hikes

It has become routine for the ruling party at the Centre to keep fuel prices steady whenever elections are near, only to raise them soon after. As late as April 29, the Petroleum Ministry had assured citizens that there would be no hike from May 1. The ₹3 increase in petrol and diesel prices is now being compared with fuel price hikes of 30% to 100% in other countries, as if to suggest that the government has acted reasonably. But such comparisons are not meaningful. India's cost of living, per capita income, and overall living conditions are different, and the poor and middle classes are unable to absorb the hike and its cascading effects. When global crude oil prices were low in the past, the benefit was not passed on to consumers. The government said the additional revenue was being used for infrastructure development. Yet, one wonders why a portion of that revenue was not set aside in a reserve fund to cushion the impact of rising crude oil prices. Policy measures must be both practical and people-friendly.

V. Nagarajan,
Chennai

The INDIA bloc, its future

The INDIA bloc never really took off at any point in time. The question (Opinion page – 'Parley', May 15) contains its answer at the very outset — the Congress is not the principal opponent in many BJP-ruled States. With the defeat of the LDF in Kerala, the TMC in West Bengal, and the Congress extending support to the TVK, much to the chagrin of the ousted DMK, the bloc appears to have suffered its final blow.

T.S. Sanath Kumar,
Thrissur, Kerala

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

GROUND ZERO

Tamil people take part in a commemoration ceremony in Mullivaikkal village in Mullaitivu district in northern Sri Lanka on May 18, 2024, to remember victims of the civil war. AFP

17 years later, the imprints of war remain

Years after the civil war ended, the Tamils of Sri Lanka continue to face poverty, high unemployment, and land takeovers. They believe that governments have done little to devise a comprehensive plan for the war-battered northern and eastern regions. While a generation of children is growing up with little understanding of the conflict, their parents are grappling with discrimination and deprivation, reports **Meera Srinivasan**

Wars do not end neatly on the battlefield, as the lives of Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east make evident.

On May 18, the community will mark 17 years since the end of the long and horrific civil war that radically altered their lives. With its shadow lingering, the memory of the war that the armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fought can hardly be confined to this annual commemoration. It manifests in their precarious daily lives and continues to weigh on their hopes for the future.

"It was very tough and risky during those years [1983-2009]," says Natarasa Padmaleela, 54, from Udayarkattu, in the northern Mullaitivu district. "We kept moving around, ate whatever was available, washed clothes with palm fruit, and lived in constant fear of shelling. But life now seems even harder."

This is a common refrain among Tamils – not because they cannot distinguish between the grave dangers of a live war and the slow, painful pace of recovery, but because "peace" has yet to bring substantive relief or real prospects for a better life. One where they can earn a decent living, feed their families three meals a day, move freely without military men peering, remember their loved ones, and heal.

It is not for the want of trying. There are few options that Sivarasa Yogeswari has not explored since the war ended. From working as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia, to finding employment on small farms for a daily wage, to being a shop assistant, she has given everything a shot.

"My life may look normal from the outside. But other than the fact that I managed to send my children to school, I have nothing to show for all this work. It is exhausting," says the 51-year-old, living in the neighbouring Kilinochchi district. The fatigue is hard to miss in her lean frame and strained gait.

Underplaying deprivation

Since 2009, the Jaffna-centric Tamil polity has largely focused on wartime accountability and the still-unresolved political question at the heart of the ethnic conflict. Whether in parliament or in their frequent meetings with representatives of foreign governments – on whom many Tamil leaders continue to pin their hopes for justice – they raise issues such as enforced disappearances, the prolonged detention of suspects under draconian anti-terror laws, military and state-backed land grabs, provincial council elections, and power devolution. They speak far less about poverty, unemployment, the strain on rural livelihoods, soaring living costs, and the widespread hopelessness felt by ordinary people.

These realities are borne out by data. A 2022-23 United Nations-led study of multidimensional vulnerabilities, based on three dimensions – education, health and disaster, living standards – and 12 indicators, including school attendance, health, unemployment, and indebtedness, found Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi, and Vavuniya in the north, and Batticaloa in the east, all of which are dominated by Tamils, among the most vulnerable districts on the island.

> Tamil politicians are fighting for our rights. The Centre (government in Colombo) should take care of our sustenance
>
> **PERUMAL PRADEEPAN**
> Fisherman in Kilinochchi

"Tamil politicians are fighting for our rights. The Centre (government in Colombo) should take care of our sustenance," says Perumal Pradeepan, a fisherman in Kilinochchi, explaining that one is like "*uduppu*" [clothes, connoting dignity] and the other, "*sappadu*" [food for survival]. Although he appears to assign the causes of dignity and equal rights to the Tamil leadership, and the responsibility of fulfilling basic material needs to the national government, he finds them intertwined in his own life: his fight for survival is not detached from his desire for dignity.

"I am 32. I have over 15 lakh (roughly ₹4.4 lakh) in debt, after I borrowed money to buy nets. I struggle every day so my family does not go hungry. It is humiliating to face the lender. This is my life," he says, tearing up.

Tamils seemed wary of President Anura Kumara Dissanayake ahead of the September 2024 presidential election – his rival candidate and now Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa got their highest vote share – but they made a quick switch in the general elections in November the same year. In Jaffna, for instance, the National People's Power (NPP) beat well-entrenched Tamil parties and won three out of six seats.

The shift was palpable days before the November 14 parliamentary polls. Addressing a packed rally in Jaffna's coastal village of Passaiyoor, Dissanayake promised to return people's lands held by state agencies. He pledged to revive industries, create jobs, and build a country where all citizens, regardless of ethnicity or religion, feel equal. His popular image of a "simple leader", charismatic outreach, and clear messaging convinced Tamils that he deserved a chance. Barring Batticaloa in the east, the NPP emerged at the top in all Tamil-majority areas in that election.

Accessing land

In April 2025, a road from Vasavilan to Palaly town in the northern part of Jaffna Peninsula was reopened to the public, 34 years after the military closed it for "security concerns". In October 2025, the Ministry of Defence convened a high-level meeting to resolve "operational and administrative hurdles" to expedite the handover of remaining private lands to their owners. Residents have welcomed the initiative, but they question its slow-paced implementation.

With multiple crises hitting the country, the already vulnerable war-hit areas are struggling to cope. A shot of the Jaffna market. MEERA SRINIVASAN

It is not just the military that controls people's land, but also other state agencies, such as the Archaeology and Forest Departments that are staking claim to land. The concern is especially prevalent in Mullaitivu district. According to Thurairasa Ravikaran, a legislator from the opposition Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) representing the district in Parliament, the Dissanayake administration has been more responsive than its predecessors to the district's infrastructure needs, including roads and bridges. "They have responded swiftly and positively on those requests. But when it comes to land grabs in the district by various state agencies, they seem unable or unwilling to address it," he says.

In the last few years, the issue has repeatedly cropped up across districts in the north and east. Kurunthurmalai in Mullaitivu became a site of fierce contestation. Tamils, whose ancestors had worshipped Siva at a hilltop temple, were suddenly told by soldiers that they could not visit the "archaeological" site, even as it rapidly morphed into a Buddhist centre of worship, with a stupa.

"Building Buddhist shrines where Hindus traditionally prayed, and taking over people's agricultural lands in the name of forest conservation is a huge concern. We see these planned settlements of Sinhalese in the north and east as a way of altering the demography of the region," Ravikaran notes, adding: "Let's not forget that contestations over land are what trigger big conflicts."

Finding jobs

In a district where the majority relies on farming and fisheries for a living, restricted access to land translates to a drastic fall in incomes. Apart from the few openings in the public services, there are few desirable jobs forthcoming for the youth. The heavy reliance on informal, rural livelihoods also means that the official rate of unemployment in these areas distorts the picture.

Joblessness is more pronounced in the north and east than in the rest of the island, Governor of the Northern Province, Nagalingam Vethanayahan, says, while pointing to the government's efforts aimed at employment creation.

"The saltern in Elephant Pass is being revived. The saltern in Kurunchathivu is another high potential area we are focusing on," he says. The government also initiated reconstruction work at the once-well-known chemical factory in Paranthan, which had been inactive for nearly four decades owing to the war. "Work is on to set up three new industrial zones in Paranthan, Mankulam, and Kankesanthurai, to boost employment and economic growth. We are also looking at expanding value addition facilities and cold storage for agricultural produce, so we can tap the export market," says the Governor, a former Government Agent (similar to a District Collector in India) who has served in Jaffna.

Locals have for long been demanding small industries tied to local resources. While the initial steps appear promising, the projects are expected to take at least a few years to become fully operational, generate employment, boost demand, and revitalise the local economy. Meanwhile, the poorest among the Tamils – impoverished by the war – continue to bear the brunt of crisis after crisis, from the Easter bombings of 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic, the island's financial meltdown in 2022, to the war in West Asia now. The crushing austerity of the ongoing International Monetary Fund fiscal adjustment programme only compounds their hardship.

A different struggle

It is in this context that Padmaleela says life is now harder. She is thinking of her time as a young LTTE combatant. She joined the movement while in her late teens, with the hope that the Tamil struggle would end the state's violent discrimination. "Honestly, I did not know what to expect in a *porattam* [struggle]. It was only after I joined them that I understood the organisation's structures and Anna's ideology," she said, referring to LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran.

As was common among cadre, she was trained in combat and served at different locations. "We were bound by purpose and idealism, and I felt cared for as an individual. Be it nutritious food, clothes or mental strength, I was looked after. But now, I feel abandoned. That is why I say this struggle is harder," she says.

Padmaleela lives in Mullaitivu with her husband, Arumugam Natarasa, and three children. Today, her husband, who she met during the movement, is a wheelchair user, following injuries from the war. "He needs a caregiver by his side," she says.

She steps out to work at small farms when one of her children is home. The family barely manages with her earnings, the government's monthly disability allowance, and the Aswesuma cash transfer scheme for select poor households.

"My older daughter runs a small tailoring business; the other two are studying," she says.

Natarasa is seated on a bed, the only piece of furniture in their living room, other than a couple of plastic chairs. He listens intently, without uttering a word. "The war really affected him. He just remains silent," she says. From trauma, to disability, to deprivation and disillusionment, the war's many imprints crowd her small home.

Except their older daughter, now 23, their children do not understand the Tamil struggle, their parents' role, or the war itself, according to Padmaleela. "They have no context or sense of history to understand our present lives. I feel there is a disconnect, but that is how it is. As long as their lives are better than ours, with decent jobs and a good future, I am okay," she says.

In Padmaleela's view, it is not just her children who are indifferent to their past; it is the Tamil polity too. "These politicians invariably turn up for Maveerar Naal ['Martyrs' Day' marked by families of LTTE cadre in November] and the Mullivaikkal commemoration [to observe the civil war's end in May]. They have no idea about how we struggle to live on other days," she notes. The dissonance between the veneration of "LTTE martyrs" on political platforms and the abject neglect of survivors of the movement pains her.

Before her many attempts to make a living, Yogeswari, too, had been part of the LTTE. Portraits of her siblings, who also belonged to the outfit and died during the war, hang in her living room. "I was called 'Inbam' [joy] in the movement. I felt seen and valued as a person. Today, I am forced to borrow money just to buy basic provisions. My heart sank when I saw another former combatant selling peanuts at a bus stop. He had been a captain. This is our life," she says stoically.

> Tamil politicians turn up for Maveerar Naal ['Martyrs' Day' marked by families of LTTE cadre in November] and the Mullivaikkal commemoration [to observe the civil war's end in May]. They have no idea about how we struggle to live on other days
>
> **NATARASA PADMALEELA**
> Farm worker

R. Jagadeeswaran says he has dozens of numbers saved on his phone with a CID (Criminal Investigation Department) or TID (Terrorism Investigation Department) prefix. The 35-year-old fisher association leader was only briefly with the LTTE, towards the end of the war, but cannot escape the surveillance that endures 17 years since its end. "They call all the time and ask about our whereabouts, what we are up to. I am sure I will get a call once you leave asking who visited me," he says. "It is frustrating to deal with this when the war is over, the movement is long gone, and we are just trying to live."

Yogeswari, too, has had to contend with frequent questioning by the CID. "Last year, they summoned me and asked whether the movement would be revived. I told them it was all over – that I was simply trying to live and raise my children." Contrary to the popular narrative that many Tamils survive, or even thrive, with money pumped in by relatives abroad, families like hers have no links outside or incoming remittances.

Other than firefighting after every crisis, successive governments have done little to devise a comprehensive economic plan for the war-battered region, contends Arunasalam Elangeswary, a coordinator for economic alternatives with the Suriya Women's Development Centre in the eastern Batticaloa district. "Batticaloa has faced multiple blows over the last few decades - the war, the tsunami, Easter bombings, pandemic, economic crisis, cyclone Ditwah, and the war in West Asia," she says, flagging the severe local impact of disasters, both natural and man-made.

Over the last two years Batticaloa, one of Sri Lanka's poorest districts, has seen the highest number of departures of migrant workers seeking employment as domestic workers and caregivers, mostly in West Asian countries. "Everyone is desperate to leave. You know there is a crisis when a coastal community forgoes fish in their meals. We also see families reducing three meals to two, and many are in debt," says Elangeswary. She adds that families need social security, "not in some narrow, targeted way, but as a broad-based policy" to cope with this pressure.

"The government should also consider giving land to groups of people, especially women, so they can cultivate it as a collective. Schemes aimed at supporting individual businesses have repeatedly proved inadequate. One-off programmes and entrepreneurship ideas cannot be sustained in a fragile economy. Meaningful revival calls for a clear economic vision," she says.

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From Page One

Petrol, diesel prices hiked by ₹3 per litre

The Opposition parties, however, slammed the Centre for the timing of the price hike, just days after results were declared in four State elections.

The Union government has been highlighting the losses being borne by OMCs, of approximately ₹1,000 crore a day from petrol, diesel, and LPG combined, due to high global oil prices. Experts say the current hike will have a limited impact, with an estimated ₹10 per litre hike needed to cover even half of the under-recoveries faced by the OMCs. Last Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked citizens to curb their consumption of petrol and diesel to reduce India's oil imports.

Sukhmal Jain, former Director for Marketing at the state-owned OMC Bharat Petroleum, told *The Hindu* that the hike was necessary, given the recent disruption to global energy markets. "The recent fuel price adjustment is a calibrated and necessary step to partially offset the sharp rise in crude oil prices, freight and operational costs being faced by India's OMCs," Mr. Jain said.

The price hikes were marginally lower in Chennai and steeper in Kolkata and Mumbai. Petrol prices in Chennai rose ₹2.83 per litre to ₹103.67, while diesel prices increased ₹2.86 per litre to ₹95.25. The price of the premium variant, 'XG', is now ₹95.99 per litre in Delhi as compared to ₹92.99 earlier. The high-octane XP95 is now priced at ₹104.88 per litre, up from ₹101.89.

However, according to Sourav Mitra, Partner for Oil & Gas at Grant Thornton Bharat, OMCs may continue to face under-recoveries despite the hike. "Prior to the price hike, under-recoveries were at around ₹13-15 per litre of petrol and ₹17-18 per litre for diesel. Hence, it had been projected that an almost ₹10 per litre retail hike would be needed to cover 50% of under-recoveries," he said. "In this context, the current hike remains below estimates."

In 2022, the price of petrol was increased by about ₹9 per litre to ₹105.41, in a staggered manner between March 28 and April 6. India's crude oil basket averaged $112.87 per barrel and $102.97 per barrel in March and April of 2022. Currently, the price of oil stands at $106.18 per barrel.
(With inputs from PTI)

Trump says U.S., China 'settled a lot of problems'

Following a grand ceremonial reception and state banquet on the first day of his visit, Mr. Trump was on Friday hosted by Mr. Xi in the Chinese leadership's expansive Zhongnanhai compound, where the two leaders walked and drank tea.

"These are two great countries, I call it the G2," Mr. Trump added in an interview with a U.S. channel aired on Friday, using a term that the Chinese government, officially at least, has not endorsed, and one that other major powers, including India, do not view favourably.

Neither offered specifics on the deals agreed upon. Mr. Xi said the visit "once again demonstrates that it is a shared aspiration of both peoples and the expectation of people across the world for China and the United States to find a right path to get along with each other and to achieve peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation on the basis of mutual respect." "While President Trump hopes to make America great again, I am dedicated to leading the Chinese people toward national rejuvenation," he said.

Mr. Trump said China had agreed to buy 200 Boeing aircraft – a smaller number than had been anticipated – as well as step up imports of soyabean. China has also agreed to resume imports of U.S. beef. Both sides on Friday did not share details of any understanding on U.S. access to rare earths – a key issue for U.S. businesses which have called on China to relax its export controls on critical minerals. Beijing put in place restrictions after the U.S. imposed controls on the export of semiconductors to China. U.S. officials said 10 Chinese firms had been cleared to purchase Nvidia's second-most advanced chip.

India's goods exports climb to $43.6 billion

He added that growth in exports in April has come from multiple countries where such high growth rates have not been seen in the past, such as Tanzania.

Merchandise exports to Tanzania grew 158% in April 2026 to $1.2 billion, while exports to several other historically smaller export destinations countries such as Sri Lanka (215%), Singapore (179%), Bangladesh (64%), and Vietnam (53%), also saw relatively strong growth.

The West Asia crisis did have an impact on India's exports to the region, however. "Exports to West Asia dived in March and declined in April as well, but now the decline is only 28%," Mr. Agrawal noted. "Our export to West Asia has been $4.16 billion as compared to $5.78 billion in April 2025." "On imports from West Asia, we see there has been a significant fall in merchandise imports, which has reduced from $15.3 billion in April last year to $10.5 billion, down 31.6%, for reasons that are well known," he added.

The data shows that exports to the UAE, one of India's biggest export destinations, fell 36.4% in April 2026 to about $2.2 billion. Notably, India's exports to the U.S. also grew during this period, albeit by a relatively smaller 1.1% to about $8.5 billion in April 2026.

NEET re-exam will be conducted on June 21

Union Education Minister says that next year onwards the exam would be computer-based; he says the CBI will conduct a thorough probe, adding that root of leak appeared to be OMR sheets

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Friday said that the National Testing Agency (NTA) will conduct a re-exam for NEET UG 2026 on June 21 and said the exam will shift to a computer-based test from next year onwards to ensure transparency.

On May 12, the NTA had announced the cancellation of the NEET-UG and said that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) would carry out a comprehensive inquiry into the alleged irregularities linked to the exam.

"From next year, the NEET exam will be conducted in a computer-based format. The main root of the leak is the Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) sheets. CBI will thoroughly investigate the leak issue," said Mr. Pradhan. He further stated that the Government would not let the malpractice happen again and that it was sensitive to the hard work that students put in for exam preparation.

High stakes: Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan addressing a press conference in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

The Union Minister added that the fees paid by the students would be refunded, and that there would be zero fees for students sitting for the re-exam. The NTA will allow students to choose their preferred exam city again.

15 minutes extension
The examination duration will be extended by 15 minutes to accommodate formalities such as signing attendance sheets. Accordingly, exams scheduled from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. will now conclude at 5.15 p.m.

"The Government of India will speak with States regarding transportation and I will personally speak with CMs so that students face minimal difficulties," Mr. Pradhan said. He also said that all students would get their admit cards by June 14.

On the incident of the alleged paper leak, he said, "After exams were conducted on May 3, the NTA got a complaint through grievance redressal on May 7 that there may be a leak due to the circulation of a guess paper. We conducted investigations from May 8 to 11 and confirmed that the guess paper was an excuse to leak questions out-....We didn't want any wrong candidate, due to the conspiracy of the education mafia, to rob merit-based candidates of their rightful seat. We have implemented the Radhakrishnan Committee recommendations, despite which this leak has happened. So we have cancelled the exam on May 12," said Mr. Pradhan.

Weight behind the NTA
Mr. Pradhan also backed the NTA, amid calls for the testing agency to be scrapped. "NTA has been formed by Supreme Court recommendations and conducts exams for one crore students each year. We will ensure zero errors", said Mr. Pradhan, adding that the issue should be viewed as a challenge related to examinations rather than an individual institution.

CBI nabs alleged 'kingpin' behind NEET paper leak

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

In a major breakthrough, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested Pune-based chemistry lecturer P.V. Kulkarni, accusing him of being the kingpin behind the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak.

According to the agency, investigations revealed that Mr. Kulkarni had access to the question papers as he was allegedly involved in the examination process on behalf of the National Testing Agency (NTA). During the last week of April 2026, he allegedly mobilised students with the help of co-accused Manisha Waghmare, a beauty salon owner who was arrested on May 14.

Mr. Kulkarni conducted special coaching classes for students at his residence in Pune. During these sessions, he allegedly dictated the questions and the correct responses, which students wrote down in their notebooks. The questions matched exactly with those in the actual NEET-UG 2026 examination held on May 3, the agency said. "In the last 24 hours, the CBI has also carried out searches at several locations across the country and seized several incriminating documents, electronic gadgets, and mobile phones," an official said.

Students protest against NEET paper leak in New Delhi. ANI

The agency had earlier arrested seven accused persons, including Ms. Waghmare. The others were identified as Dhananjay Lokhande from Ahilyanagar and Shubham Khairnar from Nashik in Maharashtra; Mangilal Biwal, Vikas Biwal, and Dinesh Biwal from Jaipur, Rajasthan; and Yash Yadav from Gurugram, Haryana.

"The investigation so far has revealed the source of the chemistry paper leak as well as the role of middlemen involved in mobilising students who paid several lakhs to attend the special coaching classes," the agency said.

CBI launches AI-powered verification system 'Abhay'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The CBI has launched an AI-based helpbot called "Abhay" for authentication of CBI notices, a system designed to protect citizens from the growing menace of digital arrest scams.

In the digital arrest scam, fraudulent notices are used to trap victims. "Once the victim is deceived into compliance, fraudsters initiate a sham legal process, keeping the victim under surveillance for days under the guise of a 'digital arrest', a concept that has no legal existence in Indian law," the CBI said. "Citizens can access 'Abhay' at any time through the CBI's official website," the agency said.

28 Naga, Kuki civilians released in Manipur; 14 Kukis still held hostage

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Two days after they were held captive following the killing of three church leaders, 28 people belonging to the Kuki and Naga communities were released by different groups on Friday. The gesture, following appeals from Manipur's political leaders, and community-based organisations, pointed to the easing of tension across the State's tribal areas. However, the groups continued to hold at least 10 others hostage. A State government communiqué said 28 people were released. Fourteen of those released were Kukis, and 14 were Nagas.

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), a Kuki-Zo organisation, said the security forces had intervened and proposed a one-for-one hostage exchange. It said the proposal was rejected as 28 Kukis were in the custody of Nagas, while 14 Nagas were held by the Kukis. An ITLF spokesperson said the Kukis released all the Naga hostages, but the Nagas released only half the number of Kukis they held captive. "The remaining 14 Kuki men are still unaccounted for," he said.

Tears of relief: People console the women who were released after they were held captive by Kuki groups in Kangpokpi on Friday. PTI

The government said the Kuki and Naga civilians were held hostage in the Kuki-dominated Kangpokpi and the Naga-majority Senapati districts. It said the situation on May 13 turned critical after unknown gunmen killed a Naga villager hours after suspected extremists gunned down three church leaders belonging to the Thadou community. The government sought the people's cooperation in maintaining peace, and securing the release of the others.

Laid to rest
Kuki-Zo organisations appealed to Naga civil society bodies to help secure the release of the remaining Kukis. The appeal followed the mass burial of the church leaders on the premises of the Thadou Baptist Association of India church at Motbung in Kangpokpi district.

Panel probing Manipur violence gets extension

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The three-member Commission of Inquiry (CoI) notified by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to probe the 2023 Manipur ethnic violence was given a fifth extension on May 13. The MHA notified that the Commission constituted on June 4, 2023 "shall submit its report to the Central government as soon as possible but not later than November 20, 2026".

More than 260 people were killed in the ethnic violence that erupted between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei people in Manipur on May 3, 2023. Around 60,000 people were displaced from their homes.

State's duty is to ensure living wages for workers, not label them as 'terrorists', says SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh government should not think of those who protested for higher wages in Noida on April 13 as "terrorists", the Supreme Court said on Friday, reminding the State of its obligation to provide a "living wage" to workers, in accordance with the Constitution's Directive Principles of State Policy. "They were asking for higher wages... Don't think they are terrorists," Justice B.V. Nagarathna, heading a two-person Bench including Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, told the Uttar Pradesh counsel.

Appearing for the petitioners – who are family members of protesters detained and jailed by the U.P. police under the National Security Act – senior advocate Colin Gonsalves and advocate Shahrukh Alam said the authorities have registered multiple FIRs against the protesters without any preliminary enquiry. Ms. Alam said the only tag the authorities could find against the detainees were that they were "left-wing sympathisers".

Directive Principles
"Is it not that the Directive Principles of State Policy require the State to ensure that living wages are paid to workers?" Justice Bhuyan asked. Ms. Alam pointed to Article 43 of the Constitution which mandates that the State "shall endeavour", through law or economic organisation or any other legitimate way, to secure to all workers a "living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities". Instead of fulfilling its obligations, the advocate noted, the State has detained them as "agent provocateurs" of the protests in Noida.

The Bench directed the State of Uttar Pradesh to produce the two young men, said to be detained in Kasna jail, on May 18 in the Court. The Court also stopped them from being moved out of judicial custody into police remand. The brothers of one of the detainees had alleged that the detainees had been tortured in police custody.

Don't blame the court for delay: CJI to Sena factions

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday turned livid at the "petty politicians" of warring Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde factions of Shiv Sena for accusing the Court of delaying a final decision on their dispute over the party symbol 'bow and arrow' while seeking adjournments every time the case came up for hearing.

"Stop your people from going to the media and making statements that the Supreme Court is not hearing... Why are these petty politicians making these statements?" Chief Justice of India Surya Kant lashed out when the parties sought an adjournment.

"You people seek a date every time the case comes up and then you go to the media and complain," the Supreme Court judge addressed the lawyers in the case.

Growing 'attacks' on the judiciary by 'parasites', CJI says

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

While hearing a lawyer's plea seeking designation as a senior advocate, Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant on Friday came down heavily on what he described as unwarranted "attacks on the judiciary" by "media, social media, and RTI activists".

"There are parasites in society who attack the system... they don't get any employment and don't have any place in the profession. Some of them become media, some of them become social media, some of them become RTI activists, and they start attacking everyone," the Chief Justice observed.

The oral remarks were made during the hearing of a plea filed by advocate Sanjay Dubey seeking initiation of contempt proceedings over the alleged delay by the Delhi High Court in implementing the Supreme Court's guidelines governing the designation of senior advocates. The Bench, also comprising Justice Bagchi, dismissed the plea, observing that senior advocate designation is a distinction "conferred" by the Court and not a "status symbol".

Later, the petitioner apologised to the Court and sought permission to withdraw the plea, which the Bench allowed.

During the hearing, the Bench also expressed concerns over the increasing number of lawyers allegedly possessing fake or dubious degrees and underscored that the issue warranted investigation. "Thousands of fraudulent people wearing black robes with serious doubts about their degrees. The CBI needs to do something," CJI Kant observed.

U.S. trade deal was a bargain for Adani's release: Rahul

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Friday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of compromising national interest to secure "release" for billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani in the United States.

"Compromised PM did not strike a trade deal, but a bargain for Adani's release," Mr. Gandhi said in a post on X, reacting to reports that the U.S. government had agreed to settle a lawsuit accusing Mr. Adani of concealing an alleged bribery to secure a solar energy project in India.

Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh alleged that the reported move explained why the Prime Minister agreed to a "hopelessly one-sided Indo-U.S. trade deal".

He also linked the issue to "Operation Sindoor", claiming that the Prime Minister halted the operation on May 10, 2025, "acting on President Trump's threats rather than on our national interest".

Congress social media head Supriya Shrinate said the case in the U.S. pertained to allegations that bribes worth more than $250 million were paid to Indian government officials to secure solar energy project contracts. "The bribe was paid with money from American investors. But in India – where the bribe was paid – there are no charges, no case...," she said.

U.S. TO DROP CHARGES
» BUSINESS

People paying price for govt. mistakes: Opposition

Congress, Trinamool, Left parties slam fuel price hike, demand rollback; CPI(M) says increase will 'impose more burdens' on people already facing inflation, unemployment, and economic distress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> *Galti Modi sarkaar ki, keemat janta chukayegi* [The public will pay the price for the Modi government's mistake]... The ₹3 shock has already arrived, the rest of the '*vasooli* [recovery]' will be done in instalments
>
> **RAHUL GANDHI,** Congress Leader

The fuel price hike announced by the Union government on Friday, days after the Bharatiya Janata Party secured victories in West Bengal and Assam Assembly elections, has drawn sharp criticism from the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the public was being forced to pay the price for the Narendra Modi government's mistakes.

Petrol and diesel prices were raised by ₹3 a litre each, marking the first increase in more than four years, as state-run fuel retailers passed on part of the impact of surging global crude prices following the Iran war.

In a post on X, Mr. Gandhi said, "*Galti Modi sarkaar ki, keemat janta chukayegi* [The public will pay the price for the Modi government's mistake]."

"The ₹3 shock has already arrived, the rest of the '*vasooli* [recovery]' will be done in instalments," he said.

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh underlined that when international oil prices were declining, the benefit was not passed on to Indian consumers.

"Now that international oil prices are climbing up because of the war in West Asia unleashed by the PM's good friends – the U.S. and Israel – and Assembly elections are over, the Modi govt. has increased petrol and diesel prices after having hiked commercial LPG prices earlier. This is bound to lead to further inflation, which is now projected to be close to 6% for this financial year. Growth estimates will be lowered considerably," he said.

Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien questioned whether the newly elected BJP government in West Bengal would reduce Value Added Tax on fuel.

"Will the Bengal Govt reduce VAT on petrol & diesel now that there's a Delhi-controlled government which doesn't have to worry about funds being blocked by Centre?" he said on X.

The Left parties have called for a rollback of the price hike. The CPI(M) Polit Bureau, in a statement, said the increase would "impose more burdens" on people already facing inflation, unemployment, stagnant wages and economic distress.

It also questioned the oil marketing companies' claim that they were facing "under-recoveries" due to rising global crude prices. "The term 'under-recovery' itself is a misnomer. It does not signify real losses incurred by OMCs; rather, it refers to a hypothetical deficit between current revenues and the larger profits they would have earned if fuel prices had been allowed to increase further," the party said.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said the burden of the hike would be felt in every household's budget. "While people are being asked to tighten their belts through austerity measures, the Modi government continues to protect corporate profiteers and pass the entire burden of its failures onto the people," he said.

India, UAE sign pacts on energy, defence as Modi visits West Asian nation

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at a ceremonial reception in Abu Dhabi. PTI

India and the UAE concluded a framework defence cooperation agreement and signed agreements on building India's strategic petroleum reserves and LNG supplies as Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a brief stopover in Abu Dhabi on Friday and met UAE President Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MbZ).

Mr. Modi travelled to the UAE as the first stop in his week-long, five-nation trip to the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Italy.

Expressing support for the UAE, that has received the brunt of attacks by Iran in retaliation for attacks by the U.S. and Israel, Mr. Modi said the targeting of the UAE was "unacceptable."

"We condemn the attacks on the UAE," Mr. Modi said in his opening remarks. "The way the UAE has been targeted is not acceptable," he added, praising the UAE's "restraint" in responding to the attacks. Mr. Modi offered India's support for all peace efforts in the region.

In a video address, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the Strategic Defence Cooperation Framework that was concluded during the visit had been proposed during a visit by MbZ to Delhi in January.

"Under this [agreement] the two sides will strengthen their collaboration in defence manufacturing, defence technology, defence equipment, industrial collaboration and cooperation and in coordination across various areas," Mr. Misri said.

A External Affairs Ministry release expanded on the areas of cooperation, including training, military exercises, special operations and interoperability, indicating the armed forces would engage with each other closely, including in "maritime security, cyber-defence and information exchanges".

Boosting India's Strategic Petroleum Reserves was another outcome of the visit, said officials, as the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company signed two MoUs for crude oil storage in India of up to 30 million barrels with the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd., and for potential crude oil storage facilities in UAE.

Congress terms PM's appeal against gold purchases a 'death warrant'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday described Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to defer gold purchases for a year as a "death warrant" for the jewellery sector and demanded that the Centre announce a special economic relief package for the nearly 3.5 crore people dependent on the industry.

"...It is an attack on the livelihoods of backward communities, traditional artisans, goldsmiths, traders and workers associated with the jewellery trade," Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala said at a press conference here.

Accusing the Union government of pushing the sector towards an "undeclared lockdown", Mr. Surjewala said the Prime Minister's appeal, coupled with the decision to raise import duty on gold and silver from 6% to 15%, would hit small jewellers and encourage smuggling and illegal trade.

"We demand that the Modi government immediately announce a special economic relief package for 3.5 crore goldsmiths, traders, artisans and workers involved in the gold jewellery industry," he said, adding that the government should also promote domestic gold mobilisation, recycling and utilisation of idle household gold stocks.

Mr. Surjewala alleged that the Prime Minister's remarks amounted to an attack on India's cultural and social traditions, arguing that gold remained integral to religious customs and served as a financial safety net for millions of women.

Mr. Surjewala recalled Mr. Modi's April 2024 election speech in Banswara, Rajasthan, in which he had accused the Opposition of wanting to "snatch *mangalsutras*" from women.

"The same Prime Minister is now advising people not to buy gold," he said.

BRICS members agree on creation of 'independent, viable' state of Palestine

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Union Minister S. Jaishankar meets Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

The BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting that concluded here on Friday reaffirmed the grouping's call for the creation of an "independent and viable state of Palestine" within the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

While consensus emerged on the Statehood for Palestine, several other issues saw the members disagreeing among themselves, which prevented the emergence of a Joint Statement, leading instead to the release of a 'Chair's Statement and Outcome Document'.

Sources said there were several significant disagreements between delegations of the United Arab Emirates and Iran, whose Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi addressed a press conference here on Friday, asserting Tehran's position on multiple issues like the bitterness with the UAE and the control over the Strait of Hormuz, which he described as a maritime region that falls within the "territorial waters of Iran and Oman".

"They reaffirmed their support for the State of Palestine's full membership in the UN in the context of the unwavering commitment to the two-state solution in accordance with international law, including relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and the Arab Peace initiative, that includes the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine within the internationally recognized 1967 borders, which included Gaza Strip and the West Bank, with East Jerusalem as its capital, to achieve the vision of two States living side by side in peace and security," the Chair's Statement said.

While the segment on Palestinian statehood did not draw any objection from members, there were indications about the UAE's objection from Mr. Araghchi, who, in response to a question on a reported objection from a BRICS member state on the paragraph on Gaza Strip, said, "Everybody knows which country blocked anything against Israel. This country provided in-depth help to the U.S. and Israel with their military bases. As far as we are concerned, they are a direct party to this aggression and should be held responsible."

The paragraph on the Gaza Strip described the territory as an "inseparable part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory" while calling for "unifying the West Bank and Gaza Strip under the Palestinian Authority".

Sources also indicated that the paragraph in the document that highlights the importance of Bab Al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea, where the Iran-backed Houthi militias have increased obstructive activities, also drew resistance from Iran. A source, who was present inside the main conference hall in Bharat Mandapam on both days, said the exchanges between Iran and the UAE were extensive and candid and "both sides believed that they were right in dealing with the war in the way that they did."

In his press conference, Mr. Araghchi highlighted the maritime situation in the Gulf region, saying the "situation in the Strait of Hormuz is complicated" and blamed the United States for the blockade. The Chair's Statement and Outcome Document placed it on record that "There were differing views among some members as regards the situation in West Asia'/Middle East region."

Kiren Rijiju flags Rahul's 'undeclared' foreign visits

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday expressed concern over the alleged "undeclared" foreign trips of Leader of the Opposition (Lok Sabha) Rahul Gandhi and asked him to share details of the travels with the authorities concerned to avoid action for any violation of law.

"Serious questions have been raised regarding Rahul Gandhi. Every Indian must follow the rules and laws, and especially a Member of Parliament must adhere to the rules strictly. The questions raised are serious because if any MP wants to travel abroad, they must inform the Secretariat of the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha three weeks in advance," he said.

"Tomorrow, ...if some actions are initiated, then the government should not be blamed for targeting Rahul *ji*," said Mr. Rijiju.

Stating that MPs also have to inform the External Affairs Ministry and the Home Ministry, he said in case an MP was to accept foreign hospitality and the expenditure was to be borne by the foreign hosts, the parliamentarian was required to inform the Home Ministry under Section 6 of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act.

Mr. Rijiju said it was a matter of "grave concern" that some of the 54 foreign visits of Mr. Gandhi – undertaken over the past 22 years – had not been declared. He said the security agencies assigned for his protection were also frustrated over such trips.

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Sd/-CHIEF ENGINEER (P&MM)
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निविदा संशोधन सूचना संख्या-01-2026-27
चांदपोल गेट एवं हाथी स्टेण्ड, आमेर महल परिसर, आमेर में पार्किंग स्थल के लिये 03 वर्ष हेतु पार्किंग ठेका कार्य हेतु विभाग द्वारा ई-निविदा सूचना क्रमांक 8381 दिनांक 16.04.2026 जारी की गई। जिसका Bid UBN No. AMD2627SLOB00021 है। इस निविदा में अधोतालिकानुसार आंशिक संशोधन किया जाता है।

संशोधन से पूर्व की शर्तें	संशोधन के पश्चात् शर्तें
तकनीकी निविदा की शर्त संख्या 12 ई.एस. आई. नियम 1948 अथवा ई.पी.एफ. नियम 1952 के अन्तर्गत पंजीकरण की प्रति संलग्न करनी आवश्यक है।	शर्त को निविदा प्रारूप से हटाया जाता है।
तकनीकी निविदा की शर्त संख्या 13 राजस्थान अनुबन्धित श्रमिक (नियमन एवं उन्मूलन) अधिनियम 1970 के अन्तर्गत रजिस्ट्रेशन की प्रति संलग्न करनी आवश्यक है।	शर्त को निविदा प्रारूप से हटाया जाता है।
तकनीकी निविदा की शर्त संख्या 5 निविदादाता को गत पांच वित्तीय वर्षों में (2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 एवं 2025-26) में औसतन राशि रूपये 65 लाख टर्नओवर संबंधित दस्तावेज तकनीकी निविदा के साथ अपलोड करना आवश्यक होगा।	गत पांच वित्तीय वर्षों में (2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, एवं 2024-25) काई भी 03 वर्षों का औसत टर्नओवर 50 लाख रखा जाता है।
तकनीकी निविदा की शर्त संख्या 6 निविदादाता को 31 मार्च, 2026 को कुल राशि रूपये 65 लाख नेटवर्थ का प्रमाण पत्र तकनीकी निविदा के साथ अपलोड करना आवश्यक होगा।	31 मार्च 2025 में 50 लाख नेट वर्थ रखा जाता है।
निविदा कार्य की शर्त संख्या 9 वाहनों के पार्किंग के आरम्भ का समय स्मारक खुलने के 01 घंटे पहले एवं स्मारक बन्द होने के 01 घंटे बाद तक मान्य रहेगा एवं इसे विभाग द्वारा घटाया या बढ़ाया जा सकता है।	परिस्थितियों के अनुसार निर्णय लिये जाने हेतु अधीक्षक, आमेर महल को अधिकृत किया जाता है।
निविदा कार्य की शर्त संख्या 20 (1) सफलतम निविदादाता को तीन वर्ष की अनुबंध राशि पर नियमों में उल्लेखित दर के अनुसार कार्य संपादन प्रतिभूति राशि का डीडी/एफ.डी.आर. के रूप में दर स्वीकृति आदेश के 7 दिवस के भीतर जमा करवानी होगी।	निविदा शर्तों में कार्य सम्पादन राशि तथा अनुबंध निस्पादित करने का समय एलओए जारी होने के 15 दिवस रखा जाता है।
निविदा कार्य की शर्त संख्या 20 (7) पार्किंग शुल्क राशि (प्रति 2.30 घंटा) एवं प्रति घंटा अतिरिक्त की राशि देय होगा।	निविदा शर्तों में पार्किंग शुल्क प्रथम 2.30 घंटे टू व्हीलर/कार जीप/टेम्पोट्रेवलर 20/70/200/ रूपये इसके पश्चात् प्रति घंटा 10/35/100 रूपये रखा जाता है।
निविदा कार्य की शर्त संख्या 21 सफलतम बिडदाता वाहनों को निर्धारित स्थान पर निर्धारित स्थान/क्षेत्र (संलग्न नक्शे की प्रति) में पार्क करायेगा।	नक्शे की प्रति संलग्न है।
बिड फार्म डाउनलोड/अपलोड करने की अवधि	दिनांक 19.05.2026 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 27.05.2026 को सांय 5.00 बजे तक
ऑनलाईन तकनीकी बिड खोलने की दिनांक	29.05.2026 को प्रातः 11.00 बजे

शेष सभी -शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।
निदेशक
DIPR/C/8442/26

Government of Karnataka
DIRECTORATE OF URBAN LAND TRANSPORT
URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER URBAN LAND TRANSPORT
BMTC, TTMC 'B' Block, (Above Bus Stand), 4th Floor, K.H.Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560027. Ph : 080-22226627 / 6628, Fax : 080-22226630, E-Mail : dultbangalore@gmail.com, dult@karnataka.gov.in
No: DULT-TECH/59/2025 Date:15.05.2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) invites separate tender (packages) E-bids from the qualified consultancies for the services of preparation of Traffic Management Plan (TMP) for 7 District Headquarters of Karnataka. The last date for the receipt ofe-bidon the KPPP portal for the **tender is 29.05.2026 5.30pm.** The bidders may download the tender document for from https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in web portal.
Tender Numbers are as follows:

Sl. No.	District Headquarter	Tender No.
1	Madikeri Chamarajanagar Chikkaballapur	DULT/2026-27/SE0050
2	Haveri Karwar	DULT/2026-27/SE0051
3	Koppal Yadgir	DULT/2026-27/SE0052

Sd/- Joint Director (Adimin)
Directorate of Urban Land Transport
Urban Development Department.
DIPR/CP/689/SHIRDI SAI/2026-27

INBRIEF

Govt. is working towards zero heatwave-related deaths: Shah

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday that the government was working towards reducing heatwave-related deaths to zero. Mr. Shah made the remarks during the President's Colour Award ceremony of the National Disaster Response Force in Ghaziabad of Uttar Pradesh. He said the NDRF had undertaken the monumental task of training more than 8,500 personnel, over 10,000 civil defence workers, more than 2.2 lakh volunteers, and over 10,500 boatmen in the past two years. He said that since 2014 India had not only worked towards disaster risk reduction, but also reached a stage where the country could move towards the goal of zero casualty.

Top court embraces austerity measures to conserve fuel

The Supreme Court of India embraced austerity measures by reducing physical hearings to three days a week and judges unanimously deciding to carpool. A circular issued by the court on Friday follows an official call by the Prime Minister and the government to take widespread fuel conservation measures. The circular said Mondays and Fridays, busiest in any given week in the court, or for that matter, any days declared as "miscellaneous", would have only hearings via videoconferencing. The Supreme Court has also cut staff presence by 50%, allowing them to work from home.

PM slams report claiming govt. planning tax on foreign travel

Dismissing news reports that the government was considering levying a tax on foreign travel, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, said there was "no question of putting such restrictions on foreign travel". The PM's response follows a report that suggested that the government was considering levying a tax or a cess or a surcharge on foreign travel but no final decision had been taken yet. "This is totally false. Not an iota of truth in this. There is no question of putting such restrictions on foreign travel. We remain committed to improving 'Ease of Doing Business' and 'Ease of Living' for our people," Mr. Modi said on X.

PCI condemns U.P. move to invoke NSA against journalist

The Press Club of India (PCI) on Friday condemned the decision of the Uttar Pradesh police to invoke the National Security Act (NSA) against Satyam Verma, editor of *Mazdoor Bigul Dasta* magazine, on the charge of provoking the recent workers' protests in Noida. The PCI urged the U.P. government to withdraw the move against Mr. Verma and free the senior journalist from detention, stating that the U.P. police invoked the NSA after nearly a month of his arrest. It noted that Mr. Verma's colleagues have alleged that a large contingent of police had also arrived at the Delhi office of the magazine to intimidate them.

Disputed Bhojshala complex a temple, says M.P. High Court

Court quashes a 2003 ASI order that allowed Muslim community to offer Friday prayers at the 11th Century monument; rejects argument that a 1935 proclamation had declared the site as a mosque

Mehul Malpani
INDORE

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Friday ruled that the disputed site of Bhojshala complex and Kamal Maula Mosque in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh is a temple dedicated to goddess Vagdevi (Saraswati). The court allowed the Hindu community to worship at the site, while dismissing the Muslim community's claim.

In a 242-page order, a Division Bench of Justices Vinay Kumar Shukla and Alok Awasthi in Indore dismissed the petitions of the Muslim and Jain communities, filed recently, while saying that the Muslim representatives can seek an alternate piece of land in Dhar district from the Madhya Pradesh government.

The court quashed a 2003 order of the Archaeology Survey of India (ASI) that allowed the Muslim community to offer Friday prayers at the site. The ASI order also permitted the Hindus to offer worship within the Bhojshala complex on Tuesday and Basant Panchami.

"The disputed area of Bhojshala and Kamal Maula Mosque is held to be a protected monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958, with effect from March 18, 1904. The religious character of disputed area is held to be a Bhojshala with a temple of goddess Vagdevi (Saraswati)," the court order said. The court took inspiration from the *Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid* verdict in 10 principles.

The HC asked the Centre to bring back an idol of goddess Saraswati from the London Museum to re-establish in the Bhojshala complex.

While the Hindu side termed it a "historic verdict", the representatives of the Muslim community said they would challenge it in the Supreme Court.

The High Court directed the Union government to make efforts to bring back an idol of goddess Saraswati from the London Museum as it had been taken to the United Kingdom in the late 1800s and re-establish in the 11th-Century monument.

The Bench rejected the Muslim side's argument that an August 1935 *Ailaan* (official proclamation) by the then princely State of Dhar declared the site as a mosque under provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935. The court noted that the Act was only enforced in April 1937, while rejecting the validity of the *Ailaan*.

"In order to secure the religious rights of the Muslim community and to ensure complete justice between the parties, in case if the respondent No.8 submits an application for allotment of a suitable land within the Dhar district for the construction of a Mosque or a place for prayer, the State Government may consider the said application in accordance with law...," it said.

It directed the Union government and the ASI to take a decision on the administration and management regarding the affairs of the Bhojshala temple and Sanskrit learning at the site, while granting the ASI management and administration control of the property.

"The ASI shall have full supervisory control over the preservation, conservation and regulation of religious access," it said.

During the hearings, the Muslim side had alleged that the ASI survey report was "biased" and prepared to back the Hindu side's claims. Claiming that the ASI ignored historical texts and its own records, the Muslim side said the survey findings "have no legal basis".

The court said the ASI had used scientific methods in its survey, including carbon dating and palaeography to determine the age and historical period of the structure, and XRF spot analysis and compositional testing to examine the construction material. "The findings scientifically supported the conclusions recorded in the report."

The order follows daily hearings that concluded on May 12, based on a report of a court-ordered scientific survey conducted by the ASI.

Monsoon likely to reach Kerala on May 26, says IMD

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

In 2025, the monsoon set in over Kerala on May 24, which is its earliest arrival since 2009.

The southwest monsoon is expected to advance into Kerala on May 26, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Friday. The "normal" date for the monsoon's advent over the State is June 1.

The monsoon has nearly arrived over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Bay of Bengal, the IMD said. From here, it is typically a 10-day journey onto mainland India though there can be various factors, such as a fomenting cyclone that can impede this development.

Last year, the monsoon set in over Kerala on May 24, its earliest arrival since 2009. Though the date of arrival does not correlate with the quantum of rainfall, the latter is a cause of concern this year with the IMD and other weather agencies having warned of "below normal" rainfall.

El Nino year

The IMD has an elaborate criteria for declaring the monsoon's onset over Kerala that includes a minimum number of meteorological stations spanning Kerala and parts of Karnataka registering a prescribed quantity of rain, wind speed, and cloud density exceeding a certain threshold.

"What we know so far is that after the monsoon onset, there will be a good amount of rain for the next five days after. The subsequent progress and advance can only be reliably known after the [forecasting] models are run subsequently," M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, told *The Hindu*.

India last experienced reduced monsoon rainfall in 2023 – when the IMD had warned of "near normal" rainfall at 96% of the long period average (LPA) – but in 2015, the IMD's warning of below normal rain, at 93% of the LPA, ended up being an overestimate with the actual rainfall being only 86% of the LPA. The main reason for this is the likely development of an El Nino – a periodic warming of the central equatorial Pacific.

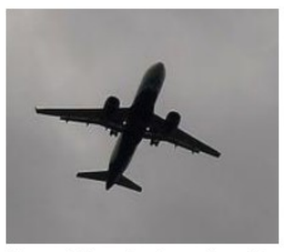
SC asks Centre to look into 'rationalisation' of airfares

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday urged the Union government to examine measures for the "rationalisation" of airfares, pointing to the stark disparity in ticket prices charged by different airlines for the same route on a single day.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was hearing a public interest litigation plea filed by social activist S. Laxminarayan seeking the formulation of binding regulatory norms to address arbitrary airfare pricing and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines during festive periods, holidays, and emergencies.

Appearing for the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Union government, Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta informed the court that the Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam, 2024, had already come into force and that rules under the new legislation were at present at the consultation stage. "We will consider all the aspects," he added.


The petitioner's advocate said that authorities are not using the set powers already in place.

Justice Mehta, however observed that the Centre ought to consider interim measures to provide relief to passengers affected by erratic and widely fluctuating airfare prices.

Mr. Mehta acknowledged the concern, but maintained that any long-term resolution could only be achieved through the formulation of statutory rules under the new aviation regime. "I am not disputing the problem, but the solution has to be by statutory rules," he said.

Senior advocate Ravindra Srivastava, appearing for the petitioner, contended that sufficient powers already existed under the prevailing regulatory framework, but were not being exercised by the authorities. "They are not issuing any directions. The rules are there, the power is there, but it is a case of non-exercise of powers."

Unnao case: court sets aside order suspending ex-BJP MLA's sentence

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday set aside a Delhi High Court order granting bail and suspending the sentence of former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the 2017 Unnao rape case.

A Bench consisting of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi asked the High Court to decide the question of suspension of sentence of Sengar afresh, preferably before the onset of the summer vacation of the courts in June.

The court had initially ordered that the High Court would finally hear and decide Sengar's appeal against his conviction within two months, and if that was not possible, then consider the plea for suspension of sentence.

However, the top Court altered the order on a submission made by senior advocate N. Hariharan that the court ought to consider the plea for suspension of sentence first and foremost.

The top court said the High Court must hear all the parties, including counsel for the survivor of the crime, on the question of suspension of sentence.

Refraining from making any comments on the merits of the case against Sengar, it said a decision on the plea for suspension of sentence must be taken by the High Court without being influenced by its earlier order on the issue.

Farmers' body rejects MSP for kharif crops, to hold protests

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella organisation of about 500 farmers' outfits, has decided to hold protests in every village by burning the copies of the government order on the minimum support price (MSP) for the kharif crops in this season.

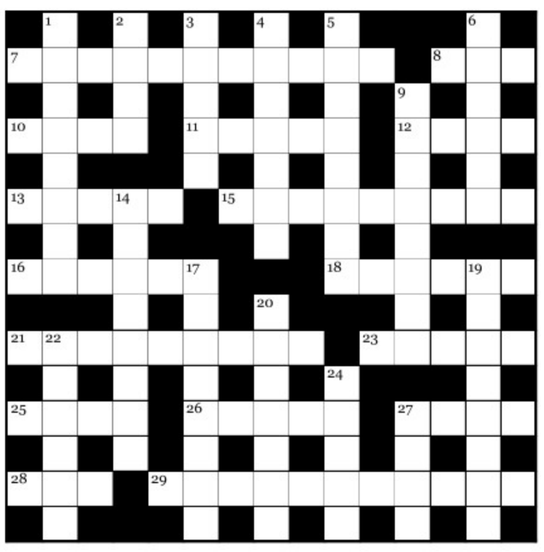
The protests will be held between May 27 and 31, the SKM said in a statement here on Friday. The SKM said the announcement of revised MSP exposed the "anti-farmer character" of the Centre. For paddy, the SKM argued, that the C2+50% price should have been ₹3,243 per quintal, much higher than what has been fixed.

TH CROSSWORD + 14795

(set by Hypatia)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

7. Get rid of letters from index term in a textbook (11)
8. Lot's spoken for a little limelight (3)
10. Deep sea fish (4)
11. Old-time secretary rearranging notes (5)
12. Local returning before India's spring harvest (4)
13. Entrances to historical and majestic pillars in heritage site (5)
15. Extremely envious incident framing one charged for spying (9)
16. Checks for auditor's rules (6)
18. I hated trips in Middle Eastern airline (6)
21. What one gets from eating garlic in the bar (3,6)
23. Husband overwhelmed by duty in mating game? (5)
25. Starts to question UN about Yemeni port (4)
26. Father wearing cool fashion brand (5)
27. Replace stews without exotic eel or fish (4)
28. Fine tips from embroidered Zari in Moroccan hat (3)
29. Actor's pass with a hint of romance in dreary kiss (7,4)

Down

1. Old accountant on vacation, initially had food - mine! (8)
2. Space between hospital sheets, ultimately in layers (4)
3. Cheer up in the morning with milk (5)
4. Topical jingle that's upside down (7)
5. Drug in operation used to release oxygen (8)
6. Spooner asking tramp to embrace fraud (6)
9. Prohibit course covering resistance wave (8)
14. Ordinary request put up in outlays for attendants (8)
17. Cleaners in school with those in tears (8)
19. Conceptual outline (8)
20. Doctor gets to drink poured rum (7)
22. Discrimination shown in cinema cum entertainment (6)
24. Say, Omani upset about bit of jeera in millet (5)
27. Penny cuddled by shy ape (4)

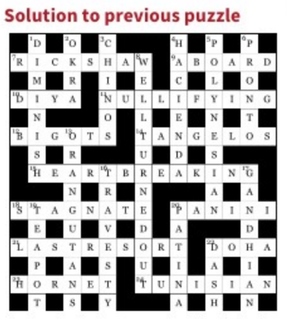
SUDOKU

6	2				3			4
							6	
	4		5		1			
	8	7		1		9		
		2				5		
		6		4		1	3	
			2		6		7	
	7							
9			7				5	8

No.SS6882 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	5	8	7	6	2	3	9	4
6	9	7	8	3	4	1	2	5
3	4	2	5	1	9	8	6	7
2	3	5	9	4	1	7	8	6
7	8	1	6	2	5	9	4	3
9	6	4	3	7	8	2	5	1
8	7	9	4	5	3	6	1	2
4	2	6	1	8	7	5	3	9
5	1	3	2	9	6	4	7	8

FAITH

Appeasing ancestors

One of the important aspects of maintaining a principled life is doing whatever it takes to satisfy the *atma* of one's ancestors and performing the due rituals, no matter how difficult it may be, said P. Swaminathan. A case in point is Bhageeradha. Sakara was the ruler of Ayodhya but was unhappy at the lack of progeny. Entrusting the kingdom to ministers, he, accompanied by his two wives, Kesini and Sumati, went to the forest and undertook severe penance. Sage Brighu appeared before them and granted the wives the boon they wanted: Kesini prayed for one son while Sumati wanted thousands of sons. In due course Kesini delivered Asamanjam while Sumati gave birth to thousands. Asamanjam turned out to be a lazy, unpleasant fellow, whose misdeeds forced his father to banish him. However, Asamanjam's wife delivered a son, Amshuman, who turned out to be the opposite of his father and was crowned as prince.

In gratitude, Sakara planned a Ashwamedha yaga, but Indra stole the sacrificial horse from the site. Sumati's sons went in search of the stolen horse and found it in the netherworld, tied to a tree near where sage Kapila was in penance. When the sons disturbed him, he let out a breath that singed them into ashes. Amshuman decided to perform the last rites of his uncles, but was informed that only celestial Ganga could help the departed souls to cross to the other world. Amshuman could not do it in his lifetime, nor could his son Dilipan. Only the grandson Bhageeradha could do so, after undertaking severe penances. Bhageeradha's ancestors finally found peace. It is necessary for one to perform such duties, regardless of obstacles.

INBRIEF

RIL-Disney take legal steps on Zee over Bollywood films

India's JioStar, the TV and online entertainment venture of Reliance and Walt Disney, has initiated legal measures against rival Zee Entertainment for alleged unauthorised broadcast of Bollywood films it has the rights to, documents show. JioStar is the No. 1 player in India's vibrant $30 billion media and entertainment industry while Zee, is a smaller rival. They are already locked in a $1 billion arbitration in London over a collapsed cricket licensing deal in 2024. REUTERS

Centre extends bid timeline for rare earth magnet scheme

The Ministry of Heavy Industries on Friday extended the bid timelines for its ₹7,280 crore scheme to develop rare earth magnet manufacturing in India. The bid due date has been extended from May 28 to June 29, while the opening of technical bids has been rescheduled to June 30. The Ministry said the revision of timelines was in response to demand from industry stakeholders. It held a pre-bid consultation with the industry on April 7.

Marginal unemployment rate rise, shows Union govt. report

The unemployment rate for persons of age 15 years and above in the country stood at 5.2% in April, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the National Statistics Office on Friday. The unemployment rate (UR) in rural areas stood at 4.6% and in urban areas, it was 6.6%. The UR or joblessness recorded for March 2026 and April 2025 was 5.1%. Urban UR was observed as 6.8% in March 2026, while the rural UR was 4.3% in the same period.

Fuel price rise to cover only ₹4,449 cr./month in OMC loss

Minister Puri said OMCs were losing ₹1,000 cr./day via petrol, diesel, LPG sales; India's petrol consumption rose 6.36% in April year-on year while that of diesel remained almost unchanged

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

The ₹3 per litre hike in the prices of petrol and diesel is expected to yield an additional monthly revenue of a little more than ₹4,400 crore for India's oil marketing companies (OMCs), a rough calculation on past sales figures shows.

Earlier this week, Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Puri stated the OMCs were losing ₹1,000 crore per day from the combined sales of petrol, diesel and LPG as they try to hold retail fuel prices steady at a time when oil prices are surging on West Asia crisis.

India consumed about 497 crore litre of petrol and 986 crore litre of diesel in April as per provisional government data. Therefore, based on these figures, the ₹3 per litre hike would earn the OMCs an addition ₹1,491 crore from the sale of petrol and ₹2,958 crore from the sale of diesel – taking total revenue addition to ₹4,449 crore in a month. According to Sourav Mitra, Partner for Oil & Gas, Grant Thornton Bharat, there was a clear headroom for further hikes.

Upward flow: According to experts there remained scope for further increase in the prices of petrol and diesel. NAGARA GOPAL

"From a forward-looking perspective, there remains clear headroom for further calibrated price hikes, should the prices remain elevated and should the government decide to reduce OMCs' burden further," he stated. "However, any such adjustments are likely to be phased and policy-sensitive, carefully balancing inflationary risk with broader macroeconomic considerations," he added.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has also said on multiple occasions that there was no proposal under consideration to bail out OMCs during the current crisis, leaving fuel price hikes as the only option. India's consumption of petrol grew 6.36% compared with the same month last year, whilst that of diesel was nearly flat – rising 0.25% – during the same period.

Brent futures surge

Amid the escalating tensions, Brent Crude futures had scaled a four-year high of $126.41 per barrel on April 30.

As of Friday evening, Brent Crude futures were trading about 2.35% higher than their previous close at $108.2 per barrel.

OMC stocks dip despite fuel price spike

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Oil marketing company stocks such as HPCL, IOC and BPCL slipped by up to 3% as rupee depreciated and global oil prices increased on Friday.

Indian Oil slid more than 4% closing at ₹134.8 a share, declining for the second consecutive session.

Hindustan Petroleum lost almost 3% and closed at ₹366.40 a share. Bharat Petroleum dipped 3.6% to ₹284.45 a share.

Rupee, profit booking

"A general decline in overall market, an increasing global crude price and the currency depreciation are the major reasons behind this, besides profit booking," said Gagan Dixit senior vice president at Elara Capital

The Union government increased the prices of petrol and diesel by ₹3 each and the investors were still bearish on the OMC stocks.

"This is because the [oil marketing] companies are losing ₹9-₹10 per litre, Mr. Dixit said.

Further, he added the short term may be "volatile" with a "bad first quarter" and increasing short tenure debt.

Borrowing capacity

Large public sector firms would have a better borrowing capability and "at the end of the day, the government makes the amount that OMCs make as profit," he added.

The prices of fuels are likely to be increased in a phased manner, according to Mr. Dixit.

U.S. set to drop criminal fraud case against Adani

Reuters

Gautam Adani

The U.S. Justice Department is close to dropping criminal fraud charges against Gautam Adani, an Indian billionaire who has promised to invest $10 billion in the U.S. economy, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

Adani on Thursday resolved a related civil fraud law suit brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) over an alleged scheme to bribe Indian government officials, subject to court approval. Adani Group did not respond to a request for comment from *Reuters* on the report of the criminal charges being dropped. It has previously called the allegations "baseless."

Shares of Adani Group companies pared early gains and were mixed on Friday in Indian trading.

Trump's lawyer

The possible dismissal of the criminal charges comes after Adani's lawyer, Robert Giuffra, who is also a personal attorney of U.S. President Donald Trump, told Justice Department officials in a presentation last month that Adani could not make its investment while the case was proceeding, one of the sources said. Adani publicly promised to invest $10 billion and create 15,000 jobs in the U.S. after Trump's victory in the 2024 election.

Mr. Giuffra spent the bulk of his 100-page presentation arguing the case was weak because it did not have proper jurisdiction and lacked evidence, said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Mr. Giuffra made a similar argument in court filings in the parallel SEC case last month.

No impact

Some prosecutors made clear that the $10 billion investment would not affect the case, one of the sources said. It's unclear if others saw it differently.

The Justice Department did not immediately comment. It is the latest example of Mr. Trump's Justice Department seeking to abandon a high-profile criminal case brought by federal prosecutors during the tenure of his Democratic predecessor, Joe Biden.

Federal prosecutors charged Adani in November 2024 over an alleged scheme in which they said he agreed to pay about $265 million in bribes to Indian government officials so his company could win approval to develop India's largest solar power plant.

India-U.K. trade deal hits late-stage 'sticking points'

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The implementation of the India-U.K. trade deal has hit a late-stage hiccup due to a new regulation on steel imports the U.K. has said it will implement from July 1, which was not part of the trade negotiations.

The India-U.K. Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was expected to come into force in May 2026, but now the two sides are trying to work out a "creative solution" to ensure the deal is implemented "at an early date", Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal told reporters on Friday.

The FTA between India and the U.K being signed.

The U.K., as part of its overall Steel Strategy, earlier this month announced that from July 1, it will significantly cut the volume of steel to be imported into the country tariff-free.

"Overall quota volumes will be cut by approximately 60% compared with the current safeguard arrangements," the U.K. government said. "Once the reduced quotas are exhausted, imports will be subject to a 50% tariff, an increase from the current 25% above-quota tariff."

That is, the quota for duty-free steel imports would be cut by 60% and tariff on above-quote imports would be doubled to 50%.

"We are very near to operationalising the India-UK FTA," Mr. Agrawal said.

"There are a few sticking points. The U.K. has come with a steel measure recently which was not factored in while negotiating the FTA. We are working together to find a creative solution around this trade measure also so that we can operationalise the CETA at an early date."

Rupee crosses psychological barrier of ₹96 per USD

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The rupee crossed the psychological barrier of ₹96 a dollar reaching an intraday low of ₹96.14 against the greenback before closing at ₹95.8.

"Market has been keenly watching Trump-Xi summit but yesterday's talks have not given any positive factor on the U.S.-Iran peace efforts though both agreed on one aspect that Strait of Hormuz should be opened," said Anil Bhansali, head of treasury, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP. He however added barring RBI's dollar sales, there are no major reason for rupee to appreciate from here.

'More people resorting to pledging gold ornaments'

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Muthoot Finance Ltd. which saw 48% growth in gold loans in FY26, is seeing demand for gold loans rising at a time when many sectors have been impacted by West Asia conflict.

"Though people's purchasing power is coming down, incomes have been impacted, as of date, we have not seen any such impact on our business," said George Alexander Muthoot, MD, Muthoot Finance Ltd. in an interview.

"Even businessmen are facing problems, they require funding. So, people are now more and more resorting to pledging gold ornaments," he said

George Alexander Muthoot

"That's why in the last five quarters, business has been good, business has been growing well, because people are trying to monetise the ornaments, get money for their needs, whether it is for the need of small business or for personal needs," he said.

"That is why you see good growth. And of course, gold prices have also helped. The price of gold in the last two years has almost doubled. So, people's gold has become quite valuable now. More and more people are now resorting to using their idle gold to get funding, which is easy," he added.

He said the curbs announced by the government to prevent import of gold and purchase of gold ornaments will not have an impact on the company.

"We finance or use household ornaments as collateral only. The gold is already with the people as ornaments. We do not finance any purchase of gold," he added.

Rapido raises $240 million from Prosus, others

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Mobility platform Rapido on Friday announced raising $240 million in a funding round led by Dutch investment firm Prosus to expand demand by creating new markets and invest in technology.

WestBridge Capital and Accel, among other investors also participated in the funding round, Rapido (Roppen Transportation Services Pvt. Ltd.) said.

With this infusion, the firm has so far raised $730-million in primary and secondary financing. This transaction values the firm at $3 billion on post-money basis, Rapido said.

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रुप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
तिरुवनंतपुरम / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM – 22 / (फोन नं. / Ph. No. 0471 – 2564568 / 5669 / 4537)

दिनांक/Dated : 15-05-2026

ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्य के लिए ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा ऑनलाइन मद-दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। On behalf of the President of India, online item-rate tenders are invited through E-tendering for the following work.

1. टर्ल्स, वीएसएससी, तुंबा में एलवीएम ३ के एस-२०० नॉज़ल अस्तर संसाधन सुविधा के लिए भवन का निर्माण (सिविल, विद्युत तथा वातानुकूलन कार्य) / Construction of building for S-200 Nozzle Liner Processing Facility for LVM3 at TERLS, VSSC, Thumba (Civil, Electrical & Air Conditioning works) **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/06/2026-27 Dt. 14.05.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 4365.40 लाख/Lakhs)**

डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 15.05.2026 को 10.00 बजे/hrs. से/to दिनांक 04.06.2026, 23.00 बजे/hrs.

इच्छुक निविदाकार ब्यौरों के लिए www.tenderwizard.in/isro या www.isro.gov.in देखें। Interested tenderers may visit www.tenderwizard.in/isro or www.isro.gov.in for details.

Sd/- प्रधान, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Head, CMG, VSSC

INDIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
(An Autonomous Institution of DST, Govt. of India)
C.V. Raman Avenue, Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru – 560080
Phone: 080 22661203, 1202, Email: execsec@ias.c.in

Tender No. 05/ES/IASc/2026-27 Dated: 14/05/2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed bids are invited under a two-bid system for: **Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of an Investment Advisor for Providing Investment Advisory Services to the Indian Academy of Sciences for Prudent and Appropriate Investment Management of the Academy Corpus Fund**.

Tender document containing eligibility criteria, terms & conditions and submission details may be downloaded from the Academy Website: **https://www.ias.ac.in/ About_IASc/Tender_notices/**

Last Date for Submission of Bid: **29 May 2026, 12.00 Noon.**

Sd/- Executive Secretary, Indian Academy of Sciences

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly Owned by Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
CIN - U04010KA2002SGC030438

NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (NIT)
(Through KPP portal)

BESCOM invites tenders for **Comprehensive Strengthening/Improvement of HT/LT Distribution network of various feeders in 03 divisions of Bangalore Rural Area Zone (BRAZ) on Partial turnkey basis (Distribution Transformers will be supplied by BESCOM) under percentage quoting basis.**

Sl. No.	Name of Circle	Name of Division	Enquiry no's
1)	Ramanagar	Chandapura	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT850/CALL-2
2)	Bangalore Rural	Nelamangala	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT845/CALL-3
3)	Kolar	Kolar	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT851/CALL-3

Availability of Bid documents: 18.05.2026, **Last date for Bid submission:** 29.05.2026 @ 15:00 Hrs. **Opening of Technical Bids:** 30.05.2026 @ 15:30 Hrs. **Pre-Bid meeting:** 22.05.2026 @ 11:00 Hrs. **Venue:** Conference Hall, 3rd Floor, BELAKU BHAVANA, Corporate office, BESCOM, K. R. Circle, Bangalore-560 001.

The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP) from the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** KPP portal Help Desk: **Phone No: +91 9240214000/ +91 9240214001/+91-8046010000/+91-8068948777, E-mail: support@eprochelpdesk.com** Aspiring bidders needs to be registered on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP). Bidders can take the assistance from the KPP during working hours.

Sd/-
Chief General Manager (Electy) Projects, BESCOM

For electricity related complaints call : 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, SUNABEDA.
email : serwsbd2003@yahoo.com
Letter No.:2170 Date:11/05/2026

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH GePNIC e_Procurement Notice

1. Name of the Work : **Construction of Road Works - 16 Nos.**
2. Class of Contractor : **"B" Class & "A" Class of (Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authority.**
3. Estimated Cost : **Various from Rs.106.38 Lakhs to Rs.346.98 Lakhs (Approximately)**
4. Details of projects : As per Annexure attached.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bids
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sunabeda	**CCERWCSBD - Online - 11/2026-27**	**18.05.2026 at 11.00 A.M.**	**08.06.2026 up to 05.00 P.M.**	**06.06.2026 up to 2.00 P.M.**	**09.06.2026 at 11.00 A.M.**	**To be intimated separately**

5. The details of works can be seen from the web site : **https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in**
6. Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the above e-tender web site.

Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sunabeda.
25001/138/2627
OIPR-25001/25182/1/26-27/0012

TAMILNADU MINERALS LIMITED
Phone No:044-29862018, 28511972
E.mail:tamin@tamingranites.com
ON BEHALF OF M/s. NLC INDIA LTD. (NLCIL), NEYVELI
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER WITH FORWARD BIDDING

1	Discription	Sale of M-Sand produced by NLCIL at its Lignite Mines of Mine 1A in Neyveli, Tamil Nadu.
2	Tender No.& date Tender ID	248/2026-P2-TAMIN-ORG, Dated: 14.05.2026 2026_TNMIN_677081_1
3	Bid submission end date	15.06.2026 upto 1600 hrs.
4	Date of Opening date	17.06.2026 at 1600 hrs.
5	Tender form fee & EMD	Rs.2,000/- (Rupees two thousand only)-Non refundable Rs.49,84,320/- (Rupees forty nine lakh eighty four thousand three hundred and twenty only)

NOTE: Further details please visit Tamil Nadu e-tendering portal: http://tntenders.gov.in

DIPR/1904/TENDER/2026 GENERAL MANAGER (FINANCE)

JERUSALEM

Israel says it carried out Gaza strike targeting Hamas armed wing head

REUTERS

Israel said on Friday that it carried out a strike in Gaza targeting Ezzedine Al-Haddad, who it described as chief of the armed wing of Palestinian movement Hamas. "Al-Haddad was responsible for the murder, abduction, and harm inflicted upon thousands of Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers," the statement said. AFP

WASHINGTON

U.S. cancels sending 4,000 troops to Poland as part of European rejig

REUTERS

The United States has cancelled the planned deployment of 4,000 soldiers to Poland, U.S. officials said on Friday, as Washington reorganises its forces in Europe after announcing it would withdraw thousands of troops from Germany. A NATO official said that "we know that the US is working to adjust its posture in Europe". AFP

KINSHASA

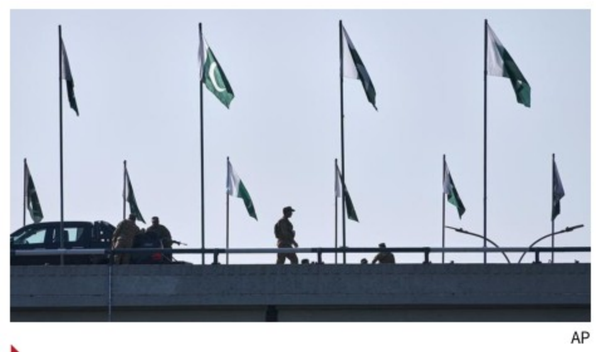
New Ebola outbreak confirmed in Congo, with 65 deaths recorded

AP

Africa's top public health agency said on Friday that there was a confirmed Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri province, with 65 deaths out of 246 suspected cases so far. It said initial findings suggested the presence of a non-Zaire strain of the virus, with sequencing ongoing to further characterise it. REUTERS

PESHAWAR

TTP militant attack on security compound kills nine in Pakistan



AP

Militants attacked a security compound in northwest Pakistan with an explosives-laden truck and gunfire, killing nine paramilitary officers, officials said on Friday. "In the attack, nine paramilitary officers and 10 militants were killed," a security official in Peshawar said. Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility. AFP

Toll in attack on Kyiv rises to 24; Ukrainian strike kills 4 in Russia

The missile hit a nine-storey residential building during what Ukraine's air force described as Russia's largest aerial barrage since the invasion began in 2022; Ukrainian attack in Ryazan near Moscow damages infrastructure, including an oil refinery

Associated Press
KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Friday that a Russian missile attack on a Kyiv apartment building the previous day killed 24 people, including what local officials said were three teenagers.

Emergency workers finished digging through the building's rubble after more than a day, Mr. Zelenskyy said on X.

The cruise missile hit the nine-storey corner block during what the Ukrainian air force said was Russia's biggest barrage of the country since its all-out invasion.

The assault mostly targeted the Ukrainian capital, where 48 people were wounded, including two children, Mr. Zelenskyy said.

Massive barrage: Fragments of a Russian rocket lie on the ground after an attack on a residential neighbourhood in Kyiv, on Friday. AP

Russia hammered Ukraine with large-scale aerial attacks in the days following a May 9-11 ceasefire that U.S. President Donald Trump said he asked Mr. Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin to observe. Fighting went on over those 72 hours, although reportedly on a lesser scale.

This week's attacks ran counter to recent suggestions from Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin that the war, now in its fifth year, is close to ending.

Mr. Zelenskyy said on Thursday that Moscow had launched more than 1,560 drones against Ukrainian population centres since Wednesday. In all, some 180 sites across the country were damaged, including more than 50 residential buildings, he said.

Four killed

Elsewhere, a Ukrainian drone attack on Ryazan, about 100 km southeast of Moscow, killed four persons, including a child, Ryazan Governor Pavel Malkov said.

"Today at night, the territory of the Ryazan region was attacked by 99 enemy drones," Mr. Malkov said.

Russia's Investigative Committee said it had opened a terrorism probe after the strikes, saying they had targeted "residential and civilian infrastructure".

"Two residential multistorey buildings and an industrial facility were damaged," it said.

After the attack, massive plumes of black smoke spewed from a fire at a local oil refinery. Ukraine has targeted Russian oil facilities in an effort to deny vital export revenue for Moscow and rattle the Kremlin.

The Ukrainian capital observed an official day of mourning on Friday in remembrance of those killed on Thursday, and Mr. Zelenskyy visited the site.

Xi asked me if the U.S. will defend Taiwan, says Trump

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

U.S. President Donald Trump said Chinese President Xi Jinping had asked him on Friday if Washington would defend Taiwan in the event of a conflict.

"That question was asked to me today by President Xi. I said, "I don't talk about that," Mr. Trump told reporters after departing China, speaking aboard Air Force One on the way back to the U.S.

Mr. Xi in Thursday's talks said the Taiwan issue was the most important question and biggest risk to China-U.S. relations. Both leaders have said they want to inject stability into the relationship.

The U.S., which in 1979 recognised the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China and ceased formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, has followed a policy of "strategic ambiguity" on whether it would involve itself in a conflict, and has said it was opposed to unilateral changes in the status quo.

Donald Trump shakes hands with Xi Jinping while leaving after a visit to the Zhongnanhai Garden in Beijing on Friday. AP

Mr. Trump was asked whether he would move ahead with expected arms sales to Taiwan, in keeping with past U.S. practice. "I'll make a determination over the next fairly short period," he said. "President Xi and I talked a lot about Taiwan... He's against very much what they're doing. We talked about Taiwan and Iran a lot. I think we have a very good understanding on both. On Taiwan, he does not want to see a fight for independence. I heard him out, I did not make a comment on it. I have a lot of respect for him."

"The last thing we need right now," Mr. Trump added, "is a war that's 9,500 miles away".

Israeli air strikes hit Lebanon as talks in U.S. enter second day

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Israel carried out new strikes in southern Lebanon on Friday that it said targeted the militant group Hezbollah, wounding 37 people as the two countries' envoys started a second day of peace talks in Washington.

A truce in the war between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah has been in place since April 17, but it has not stopped the fighting, with hundreds killed in strikes since then and both sides accusing the other of violations.

The U.S. described the first day of talks in Washington on Thursday as positive, and the two sides were set to resume the negotiations on Friday.

The talks in Washington were focused on the shaky ceasefire, which is set to expire on Sunday if an extension is not agreed.

U.S. 'seeks to indict Cuba's ex-President Raul Castro' amid escalating fuel crisis

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

The United States is seeking to indict Raul Castro, the 94-year-old brother of late Cuban leader Fidel Castro, as Washington ramps up pressure on the communist-run island, U.S. media reported on Thursday.

An indictment of Mr. Castro would be a stunning twist in the deepening crisis in U.S.-Cuba relations, with the island enduring constant power outages prompted by U.S. President Donald Trump's fuel blockade.

Raul Castro

Mr. Trump has repeatedly signalled that he wants to topple the communist government in Cuba.

Raul Castro, who succeeded his brother as President of Cuba, oversaw a historic 2015 rapprochement with the United States under Barack Obama that Mr. Trump later reversed.

CBS News reported that the possible indictment would focus on the 1996 downing of two civilian planes manned by anti-Castro pilots, citing U.S. officials familiar with it.

Meanwhile, CIA Director John Ratcliffe met with Cuban officials including Raul Castro's grandson during a high-level visit to the island on Thursday, Cuban and U.S. officials said.

Mr. Ratcliffe met with Raul Guillermo Rodriguez Castro, Interior Minister Lazaro Alvarez Casas and the head of Cuban intelligence services, and discussed intelligence cooperation, economic stability and security issues. A CIA official confirmed the meetings.

U.S. willing to resume talks, open to China's help, says Iran FM

Agence France-Presse
NEW DELHI

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday he had "received messages" from the United States saying it is willing to continue talks, and that he was open to any support, including from China.

"We received messages again from the Americans saying that they are willing to continue the talks and continue the interaction," Mr. Araghchi told presspersons in the Indian capital.

"We appreciate any country who has the ability to help, particularly China," he said.

"We have very good relations with China, we are strategic partners to each other, and we know that (the) Chinese have a good intention, so anything that can be done by them to help diplomacy would be welcomed by the Islamic republic," he added.

Sport

It's Pooja-Janet vs. Joshna-Rathika

DOUBLES SQUASH

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

Pooja Arthi completed a hat-trick of final appearances in the National doubles squash championships at the Indian Squash and Triathlon Academy here on Friday.

The Pooja-Janet Vidhi duo scripted a hard-fought 8-11, 12-10, 11-5 victory over the second-seeded combination of Nirupama Dubey and Shameena Riaz in the women's Group-B round-robin match.

The unseeded pair will face the top-seeded combination of Joshna Chinappa and Rathika Seelan in the summit clash on Saturday.

Like Pooja, Rathika, too, will be making her third straight women's doubles final. Facing two match points at 8-10 in the second game, Pooja and Janet mounted a spirited comeback with an aggressive approach, highlighted by a couple of forehand winners from the backcourt.

Impressive: Pooja and Janet, both in pink, played an aggressive brand of squash. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

A delicate backhand drop shot from Pooja eventually sealed the game for the pair. Carrying the momentum into the decider, Pooja and Janet surged to 5-1 and later 9-3 leads before comfortably closing out the match.

"In the previous two Nationals, I had partnered Rathika. We won the first edition and finished runner-up in the other," said Pooja.

Pooja and Janet felt that holding more doubles tournaments would significantly help players improve in the format. "We both love playing doubles more than singles," Pooja said.

The results: Men (semifinals): Abhay Singh & Velavan Senthilkumar bt Ravi Dixit & Vikas Mehra 11-1, 11-6; Rahul Baitha & Suraj Kumar Chand bt Guhan Senthilkumar & P.R. Sandhesh 11-8, 11-7.

Women: Group-A: Joshna Chinappa & Rathika Seelan bt Ananya Narayan & Anika Dubey 11-5, 11-4; **B:** Pooja Arthi & Janet Vidhi bt Nirupama Dubey & Shameena Riaz 8-11, 12-10, 11-5.

Mixed (semifinals): Velavan Senthilkumar & Joshna Chinappa bt Rahul Baitha & Anika Dubey 11-6, 11-9; Abhay Singh & Rathika Seelan bt 12-10, 11-7.

Satwik-Chirag duo enters the semifinals; Lakshya, Sindhu exit

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
BANGKOK

India's top-seeded men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty stormed into the semifinals of the $500,000 Thailand Open Super 500 badminton tournament, with a 21-12, 21-13 win over the sixth-seeded Japanese combination of Takumi Nomura and Yuichi Shimogami, here on Friday.

Crashing out

However, both Lakshya Sen and P.V. Sindhu crashed out in the quarterfinals in contrasting fashion. While Lakshya, seeded seventh, lost 19-21, 16-21 to local star and second seed Kunlavut Vitidsarn in 53 minutes, Sindhu squandered the advantage of winning the opening game to go down fighting to top seed Akane Yamaguchi of Japan 21-19, 18-21, 15-21 in a match that lasted just over an hour.

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs Pakistan: 2nd Test, day 1, FanCode, 9.30 a.m.

ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 p.m.

Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 7 p.m.

IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Global Influence for main event

BENGALURU: Global Influence, who has been well prepared, is expected to score in the B.T.C. Charitable Trust Trophy (1,400m), the main event of the races to be held here on Saturday (May 16). There will be no false rails.

1 QUASAR PLATE (DIV. II), 1,400m, rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o & over, 3-00 p.m.: 1. Dr Ash (4) M. Rajesh K 60, 2. Elveden (1) Aleemuddin 59.5, 3. Acantha (5) Trevor 59, 4. Star Comet (8) Rayan 58, 5. Bruce Almighty (7) Arshad 57.5, 6. Turkoman (2) Rushal G.A 57.5, 7. Art Of Romance (3) Kiran Rai 55 and 8. Real Happiness (6) A.A. Vikrant 55.

1. ACANTHA, 2. DR ASH, 3. BRUCE ALMIGHTY

2 ICH DIEN PLATE (1,400m), rated 00 to 25, 3-30: 1. Royal Jewel (5) Akshay K 62, 2. Big Sauce (6) Arvind K 61, 3. Magna Carta (9) Vinod Shinde 61, 4. Supreme Success (8) Suraj 61, 5. Vafadar (7) Aditya W 60.5, 6. Honeypot (11) M. Rajesh K 60, 7. Enjoyable (10) Kiran Rai 59.5, 8. Jolie's Star (3) P. Mani 59, 9. Legendary Impact (4) Neeraj 58, 10. Bezawada Blaze (2) Arul J.H 54 and 11. Recreator (1) Arshad 50.

1. ROYAL JEWEL, 2. SUPREME SUCCESS, 3. HONEY POT

3 QUASAR PLATE (DIV. I), 1,400m, rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o & over, 4-00: 1. Baashha (2) S. Sachin 62.5, 2. Exceed (8) J. Chinoy 62, 3. Amazing Stride (4) Neeraj 61, 4. Noble Cause (6) L.A. Rozario 59.5, 5. Shahenshaah (5) A. Ramu 58.5, 6. Stentorian (1) G. Praveen 58.5, 7. Augusto (7) Arvind K 57.5 and 8. Feeling Good (3) Suhas K 57.5.

1. AMAZING STRIDE, 2. EXCEED, 3. FEELING GOOD

4 B.T.C. CHARITABLE TRUST TROPHY (1,400m), rated 80 & above, 4-30: 1. Ricardo (5) Aleemuddin 62.5, 2. Global Influence (2) Suraj 58.5, 3. Queen Of Kings (3) M. Prabhakaran 54.5, 4. Star Glory (4) Yash 54 and 5. Don Carlos (1) Akshay K 50.5.

1. GLOBAL INFLUENCE, 2. RICARDO

5 STAR CONTENDER PLATE (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 5-00: 1. Burevestnik (3) Shreyas S 56, 2. Personal Legend (2) A. Ramu 56, 3. Shining Ways (7) Suraj 56, 4. Diana (8) M. Rajesh K 54.5, 5. Flavianus (5) Antony 54.5, 6. Quannah (1) Trevor 54.5, 7. Regal Beauty (4) Akshay K 54.5 and 8. Shrishti (6) Yash 54.5.

1. QUANNAH, 2. BUREVESTNIK, 3. REGAL BEAUTY

6 MANITOU PLATE (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 5-30: 1. Darrington (2) Arvind K 60, 2. Lightning Blitz (8) Siddaraju P 54, 3. Solara (3) Akshay K 54, 4. Big B (7) Kiran Rai 53.5, 5. Diesel (11) Arul J.H 52.5, 6. Hallstatt (5) Rayan 52.5, 7. Fiery Love (4) Vinod Shinde 52, 8. Hushed (6) Rafique S.K 52, 9. Glaze (10) M. Rajesh K 51.5, 10. Khazana (9) Neeraj 51 and 11. Power Pilot (1) Suhas K 51.

1. SOLARA, 2. KHAZANA, 3. DARRINGTON

Day's best: GLOBAL INFLUENCE
Double: ROYAL JEWEL – SOLARA
Jkt: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6; Mini Jkt: 3, 4, 5 and 6; Tr (i): 1, 2 and 3; (ii): 4, 5 and 6.

WAIT AND WATCH

Suspense over Varun's availability for the clash against Gujarat Titans

K.R. DEEPAK

There is suspense over Varun Chakaravarthy's availability for Kolkata Knight Riders' IPL 2026 game against Gujarat Titans. Varun bowled briefly at the nets before leaving early on the match eve. Releasing a short video of Varun bowling, KKR said its medical team and coaches were keeping a close eye on the spinner's progress.

TOP PRIORITY

Kiwi all-rounder Rachin leaves KKR for England tour preparations

FILE PHOTO

Kolkata Knight Riders all-rounder Rachin Ravindra has left the team to begin preparations for New Zealand's upcoming Test tour of England, the franchise announced on the eve of its match against Gujarat Titans. Bought by KKR for his base price of ₹2 crore, Rachin did not feature in a single game this season.

SOLANKI'S TAKE

'It's a generalisation to say that the middle-order isn't playing its part'

K.R. DEEPAK

Our bowlers have bowled well and the top-order has played well at times. It's a bit of generalisation to suggest that the middle-order is not playing its part. Of course, not all members of the team will be contributing at the same time — Gujarat Titans director of cricket Vikram Solanki ahead of the Kolkata Knight Riders game.

LATEST ADDITIONS

Kuldip, Gleeson replace injured pacers Khaleel and Thushara

FILE PHOTO

Chennai Super Kings named left-arm pacer Kuldip Yadav as the replacement for the injured Khaleel Ahmed while Royal Challengers Bengaluru brought in England fast bowler Richard Gleeson, *in pic.*, to fill in for Nuwan Thushara in the ongoing IPL. Kuldip will join CSK for ₹30 lakh, whereas Gleeson will be paid ₹1.6 crore by RCB.

Akash and Marsh on fire as LSG delivers a body blow to CSK

The young left-arm pacer rocks the visiting side's top-order with an unchanged spell in his first game of the season; the swashbuckling opener's 38-ball 90 paves the way for a thumping win; rookie Kartik's fighting knock goes in vain

IPL-19

S. Dipak Ragav
LUCKNOW

For the second time this season, Mitchell Marsh lit up the night sky at the Ekana Stadium as his marauding 38-ball 90 (9x4, 7x6) powered his side to a thumping seven-wicket over Chennai Super Kings in an IPL 2026 encounter here on Friday.

A week after his 111 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the same venue, Marsh unleashed his brutal power hitting on a hapless Super Kings pace attack and made short work of the 188-run target.

At the halfway stage, Ruturaj Gaikwad's men would have fancied their chances. The CSK bowlers, though, failed to hit the right lengths and paid the price.

Marsh started by picking Mukesh Choudhary off his pads for a couple of boundaries in the first over to set the tone.

Then in the fifth over, he cut loose, smashing Anshul Kamboj for four maximums and a four. The LSG opener charged down and smacked Kamboj over cover off the first ball, and it was enough to rattle the pacer.

Kamboj followed it up by feeding innocuous short-pitched deliveries, which were duly dispatched over the ropes.

In the final over of the PowerPlay, Marsh did not spare compatriot Spencer Johnson, swatting him over leg-side to race to his half-century off just 21 balls.

By the time the Australian was dismissed run out at the non-striker's end, he had brought the equation to nearly a run-a-ball.

Sizzlers: Marsh made short work of the target after Kartik fought hard. Akash scalped three. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Royal Challengers	12	8	4	0	16	1.053
Gujarat Titans	12	8	4	0	16	0.551
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	7	5	0	14	0.331
Punjab Kings	12	6	5	1	13	0.355
Rajasthan Royals	11	6	5	0	12	0.082
Chennai Super Kings	12	6	6	0	12	0.027
Delhi Capitals	12	5	7	0	10	-0.993
Kolkata Knight Riders	11	4	6	1	9	-0.198
Mumbai Indians (E)	12	4	8	0	8	-0.504
Lucknow Super Giants (E)	12	4	8	0	8	-0.701

E: Eliminated

Grand finish

Nicholas Pooran closed it out in style when he meted out a similar treatment to Kamboj by punishing him for four consecutive sixes as LSG cantered home with 20 balls to spare.

For CSK, the loss ended its three-match winning streak and, more importantly, dealt a huge blow to its playoff chances.

Earlier, Super Kings managed 187 for five riding on Kartik Sharma's fine 71 (42b, 6x4, 5x6) after being put in to bat.

Akash Singh (4-0-26-3), playing his first game of the season, was impressive with his back-of-length deliveries, scalping three wickets in an unchanged four-over burst.

CSK could only muster 37 for two in the Power-Play. Even as his teammates struggled, Kartik demonstrated his temperament in the manner he adapted to the challenging conditions.

On the money

His shot selection was on the money, evidenced by his well-timed pulled sixes off Prince Yadav as he guided his team to a decent total. However, Marsh had other ideas.

SCOREBOARD

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Sanju Samson c Mukul b Akash 20 *(20b, 3x4)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad c Pooran b Akash 13 *(9b, 2x4)*, Urvil Patel c Marsh b Akash 6 *(7b, 1x4)*, Kartik Sharma c Markram b Shahbaz 71 *(42b, 6x4, 5x6)*, Dewald Brevis c Akash b Shami 25 *(16b, 2x6)*, Shivam Dube (not out) 32 *(16b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Prashant Veer (not out) 13 *(10b, 1x4)*; Extras (w-7): 7; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 187.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-31 (Ruturaj, 3.5 overs), 2-36 (Samson, 5.3), 3-52 (Urvil, 7.2), 4-122 (Brevis, 14.4), 5-142 (Kartik, 15.6).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Shami 4-0-41-1, Akash 4-0-26-3, Prince 4-0-49-0, Mayank 4-0-26-0, Shahbaz 4-0-45-1.

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Mitchell Marsh run out 90 *(38b, 9x4, 7x6)*, Josh Inglis **(Impact Player for Prince)** c Urvil b Mukesh 36 *(32b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Nicholas Pooran (not out) 32 *(17b, 1x4, 4x6)*, Abdul Samad b Johnson 7 *(3b, 1x6)*, Mukul Choudhary (not out) 13 *(10b, 2x4)*; Extras (b-1, lb-6, w-3): 10; Total (for three wkts. in 16.4 overs): 188.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-135 (Inglis, 11.4), 2-135 (Marsh, 11.5), 3-144 (Samad, 13.2).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Mukesh 3-0-24-1, Johnson 4-0-39-1, Kamboj 2.4-0-63-0, Noor 4-0-21-0, Gurjapneet **(Impact Player for Dube)** 3-0-34-0.

Toss: LSG.
PoM: Marsh.
Super Giants won by seven wickets with 20 balls to spare.

Next assignment

CSK: May 18 vs. SRH Chennai, 7.30 p.m.

LSG: May 19 vs. RR Jaipur, 7.30 p.m.

Knight Riders meet Titans in a must-win encounter

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Facing contrasting scenarios, Kolkata Knight Riders and Gujarat Titans will meet in a crucial IPL 2026 fixture at the Eden Gardens here on Saturday.

The second-placed GT, under Shubman Gill, will look to record another win and confirm its berth in the playoffs.

KKR, which is languishing in eighth spot, will be keen to win the remaining three matches as its chances of qualification hangs by a thread. The Ajinkya Rahane-led squad is returning home after spending three eventful weeks on the road.

KKR felt the absence of injured spinner Varun Chakaravarthy as it could not defend 192 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in its previous outing.

Varun's ability to operate in tandem with Sunil Narine and Anukul Roy to dry up the runs in the middle overs was sorely missed. The team would be eager to see him back in action.

The hard-working Kartik Tyagi (16 wickets) and Vaibhav Arora (11) should continue to shoulder responsibility in the pace department. Aussie all-rounder Cameron Green will hope to provide the requisite balance.

Simple plan: KKR opener Allen will be keen to continue his slam-bang style. K.R. DEEPAK

Today's match

Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 5
KKR 1 | GT 4

PREVIOUS MEETING
GT won by **five wickets**, 2026

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

KRR will depend on its top run-getter Angkrish Raghuvanshi (340), Rinku Singh (286), Green (264), Rahane (237) and Finn Allen (228) to come good.

Having recorded five wins on the trot, GT will bank on its formidable bowling attack, comprising Kagiso Rabada (21 wickets), Rashid Khan (16), Prasidh Krishna (14), Jason Holder and Mohammed Siraj (13 each), to carry on the winning momentum.

Led by Sai Sudharsan (501 runs), the GT batting, also including top performers such as Gill (467), Jos Buttler (355) and Washington Sundar (296), is capable of running riot.

While the Eden track is known for favouring the batters, some assistance for the bowlers cannot be ruled out.

Even though the purple-and-gold brigade will enjoy the home support, GT, due to its better head-to-head record and current form, seems to have the edge.

Mbappe headlines France squad for FIFA World Cup

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Kylian Mbappe will lead France at the World Cup after coach Didier Deschamps on Thursday announced his 26-man squad for the summer tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The French forward line will also feature Ballon d'Or holder Ousmane Dembele, Desire Doue and winger Michael Olise.

Belgium coach Rudi Garcia named Romelu Lukaku despite saying that Belgium's record goalscorer was "out of shape". Injured Kaoru Mitoma was left out of Japan's squad in a big blow to its chances of getting beyond the last-16 stage for the first time.

Mbappe. REUTERS

The squads: France:
Goalkeepers: Mike Maignan, Robin Risser, Brice Samba.
Defenders: Lucas Digne, Malo Gusto, Lucas Hernandez, Theo Hernandez, Ibrahima Konate, Maxence Lacroix, Jules Kounde, William Saliba, Dayot Upamecano.
Midfielders: N'Golo Kante, Manu Kone, Adrien Rabiot, Aurelien Tchouameni, Warren Zaire-Emery.
Forwards: Maghnes Akliouche, Bradley Barcola, Rayan Cherki, Ousmane Dembele, Desire Doue, Michael Olise, Kylian Mbappe, Jean-Philippe Mateta, Marcus Thuram.
Belgium: Goalkeepers: Thibaut Courtois, Senne Lammens, Mike Penders.
Defenders: Timothy Castagne, Zeno Debast, Maxim De Cuyper, Koni De Winter, Brandon Mechele, Thomas Meunier, Nathan Ngoy, Joaquin Seys, Arthur Theate.
Midfielders: Kevin De Bruyne, Amadou Onana, Nicolas Raskin, Youri Tielemans, Hans Vanaken, Axel Witsel.
Forwards: Charles De Ketelaere, Jeremy Doku, Matias Fernandez-Pardo, Romelu Lukaku, Dodi Lukebakio, Diego Moreira, Alexis Saelemaekers, Leandro Trossard.
Japan: Goalkeepers: Zion Suzuki, Keisuke Osako, Tomoki Hayakawa.
Defenders: Yuto Nagatomo, Shogo Taniguchi, Ko Itakura, Tsuyoshi Watanabe, Takehiro Tomiyasu, Hiroki Ito, Ayumu Seko, Yukinari Sugawara, Junnosuke Suzuki.
Midfielders/forwards: Wataru Endo, Junya Ito, Daichi Kamada, Koki Ogawa, Daizen Maeda, Ritsu Doan, Ayase Ueda, Ao Tanaka, Keito Nakamura, Kaishu Sano, Takefusa Kubo, Yuito Suzuki, Kento Shiogai, Keisuke Goto.
Tunisia: Goalkeepers: Sabri Ben Hessen, Abdelmouhib Chamakh, Aymen Dahman.
Defenders: Ali Abdi, Adem Arous, Mohamed Amine Ben Hamida, Dylan Bronn, Raed Chikhaoui, Moutaz Neffati, Omar Rekik, Montassar Talbi, Yan Valery.
Midfielders: Mortadha Ben Ouanes, Anis Ben Slimane, Ismael Gharbi, Rani Khedira, Mohamed Hadj Mahmoud, Hannibal Mejbri, Ellyes Skhiri.
Forwards: Elias Achouri, Khalil Ayari, Firas Chaouat, Rayan Elloumi, Hazem Mastouri, Elias Saad, Sebastian Tounekti.
Haiti: Goalkeepers: Johnny Placide, Alexandre Pierre, Josue Duverger.
Defenders: Carlens Arcus, Wilguens Paugain, Duke Lacroix, Martin Experience, J.K. Duverne, Ricardo Ade, Hannes Delcroix, Keeto Thermoncy.
Midfielders: Leverton Pierre, Carl-Fred Sainte, Danley Jean-Jacques, Jean-Ricner Bellegarde, Woodensky Pierre, Simon Dominique.
Forwards: Louicius Deedson, Ruben Providence, Josue Casimir, Derrick Etienne, Wilson Isidor, Duckens Nazon, Frantzdy Pierrot, Yassin Fortune, Lenny Joseph.

SNAPSHOTS

Kohli open to playing in 2027 World Cup if he can still 'add value'

NEW DELHI: India batting great Virat Kohli said he would consider playing in the 2027 ODI World Cup if he can still "add value" to the team.

"If I can add value to the environment that I'm a part of, and the environment feels like I can add value, I'll be seen," the 37-year-old said in a Royal Challengers Bengaluru podcast.

"If I'm made to feel like I need to prove my worth and my value, I'm not in that space. I want to play cricket and I want to carry on," he added.

Indian pugilists win 17 medals in the under-17 category

TASHKENT: India's campaign at the Asian Boxing u-17 Championships ended with a total of 17 medals – two gold, seven silver, and eight bronze – with the girls leading the charge. Rakhi (46kg) clinched gold with a Referee Stopped Contest (RSC) victory over Rukhshonabonu Ahadova of Uzbekistan, while Navya (57kg) secured the second yellow metal with a 4-0 win against Japan's Sara Kono.

Praggnanandhaa outwits Sindarov

BUCHAREST: Indian Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa reserved his best against the in-form World championship challenger Javokhir Sindarov, outwitting him in the second round of the Super Chess Classic on Friday. After the end of the second round, Praggnanandhaa, Vincent Keymer and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave shared the lead with 1.5 points each.

Mumbai City crushes Mohammedan, keeps slim title hopes alive

KOLKATA: Former champion Mumbai City FC kept the race for the Indian Super League title alive with an emphatic 4-0 win over Mohammedan Sporting SC at Kishore Bharati Stadium on Friday. The convincing win saw Mumbai City joining East Bengal FC and Mohun Bagan Super Giant at the top of the standings with 22 points.

However, East Bengal and Bagan continue to occupy the top two spots due to a superior goal difference, while Mumbai City remains third, having played one game more.

The result:
Mohammedan 0 lost to Mumbai City 4 (Sahil Panwar 1, Zothanpuia 8, Sajad Hussain Parray 25-og, Brandon Fernandes 79).

Scheffler among seven in the lead

The defending champion is on top after the first round for the first time in a Major

Solid start: Scheffler's three-under-par 67 was laced with five birdies and two bogeys. AFP

PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

Agence France-Presse
PHILADELPHIA

Top-ranked defending champion Scottie Scheffler fired a three-under par 67 to seize a share of the lead in Thursday's opening round of the PGA Championship.

South African Aldrich Potgieter, Australian Min Woo Lee, American Alex Smalley, Japan's Ryo Hisatsune and Germans Stephan Jaeger and Martin Kaymer also shot 67 to be on top by a stroke on a wild day at Aronimink.

Scheffler, a four-time Major winner, made five birdies against two bogeys and found himself atop the leaderboard after 18 holes for the first time in a Major.

"But is it really a lead when you're tied with six or seven guys?" the American wondered. "The golf course was pretty challenging," Scheffler said. "I did a good job staying in it mentally on a course that was difficult at times."

Scheffler made birdie putts from 38 feet at seven, 28 feet at 10 and just inside nine feet at 11 to share the lead, then answered a three-putt bogey at 14 with a four-foot birdie putt at 16.

American Jordan Spieth, who would complete a career Grand Slam with a victory, fired a 69.

Masters winner Rory McIlroy was frustrated after a 74, having no problems with a blister but plenty with his golf swing.

Leading scores (first round):
67: Min Woo Lee, Martin Kaymer, Stephan Jaeger, Ryo Hisatsune, Aldrich Potgieter, Scottie Scheffler, Alex Smalley. **68:** Patrick Reed, Max Greyserman, Xander Schauffele, Sahith Theegala, Shane Lowry, Corey Conners, Daniel Brown.

Sekulic stops Tyagi, meets Smith in final

TENNIS

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Philip Sekulic snapped Kriish Tyagi's fine run with a facile 6-0, 6-2 victory in the Karnataka Open ATP Challenger semifinal at the S.M. Krishna Tennis Stadium here on Friday.

Sekulic (World no. 357), the fourth seed, dominated his wildcard opponent from start to finish.

Forehand and backhand winners flew from the Australian's racquet, while Tyagi struggled to keep up.

On certain occasions, the Indian teenager – playing his first Challenger semifinal – did manage to prolong the point, but Sekulic's immense firepower eventually had final say.

Calling the shots: Sekulic proved too hot to handle for Tyagi. K. MURALI KUMAR

In the final on Saturday, Sekulic will face top-seed Keegan Smith, in what promises to be an engrossing encounter.

Smith passed a stern test from Ilya Ivashka in the other semifinal. Belarusian Ivashka, a former World no. 40, was a combative presence.

Ivashka had several animated chats with his team in the stands, and even made a long, heartfelt complaint about line calls not going his way.

The American, who used his 6'7" frame to generate tremendous bounce and power on his serves and was clinical with his volleys, won 6-4, 6-4.

Giant-killers
Niki Kaliyanda Poonacha and Saketh Myneni ousted top-seeds Prajwal Dev and Nitin Kumar Sinha 7-5, 6-1 to enter the doubles final.

The results (semifinals):
Singles: Keegan Smith (USA) bt Ilya Ivashka 6-4, 6-4; Philip Sekulic (Aus) bt Kriish Tyagi 6-0, 6-2. **Doubles:** Niki Kaliyanda Poonacha & Saketh Myneni bt Prajwal Dev & Nitin Kumar Sinha 7-5, 6-1; Petr Bar & Grigoriy Lomakin (Kaz) bt Adil Kalyanpur & Mukund Sasikumar 7-6(4), 7-6(4).

Mbappe whistled by fans as Real beats Oviedo

Agence France-Presse
MADRID

Real Madrid star Kylian Mbappe was whistled by fans at the Santiago Bernabeu in his team's 2-0 win over Real Oviedo on Thursday in LaLiga.

Mbappe has come in for heavy criticism from the club's fans in recent weeks for a perceived lack of commitment.

Many others have been jeered by Madrid supporters over the years, including Mbappe's idol Cristiano Ronaldo.

The results: Valencia 1 (Lopez 40) drew with Rayo Vallecano 1 (Lejeune 21); Girona 1 (Stuani 66) drew with Real Sociedad 1 (Martin 28).
Real Madrid 2 (Gonzalo Garcia 44, Bellingham 80) bt Real Oviedo 0.

BFC aims to stay afloat in ISL title race

Joan Mathew Jacob
CHENNAI

Chennaiyin FC cannot wait for the ISL season to end.

Seven losses, three draws and just two 1-0 wins have left the former champion languishing in 13th place, better only than relegation-threatened Mohammedan SC. And Chennaiyin is among two sides that are yet to hit double figures in goals this season.

Its final fixture against title-chasing Bengaluru FC – who only have faint hopes – at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Saturday offers little encouragement.

CFC head coach Clifford Miranda admitted that finishing woes had hampered his side. "Teams above us have created less but scored more," he said.

Meanwhile, his counterpart Pep Munoz has not fared much better either. One victory, two draws and a defeat after taking over from Renedy Singh mean that Bengaluru is fifth on the table, two points off the top spot. However, he will fancy his chances after BFC became the first team to beat Jamshedpur FC at its home this campaign.

Miranda said that Alberto Noguera, Mohammed Ali Bemammer and Laldinliana Renthlei were among the major absentees for the early kick-off, but assured that his side would "fight with whatever we have" for one final time.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Bengaluru United gains promotion to IFL
FC Bengaluru United earned promotion to the Indian Football League 2026-27 by finishing second in the I-League 2. In FCBU's last outing, it secured a 1-1 draw against GMSC at Mumbai. FCBU and United SC both finished the season on 15 points, but the Bengaluru outfit secured promotion on the basis of goal difference.
Delhi FC (17 points) was crowned champion.
"This achievement is an incredibly proud and exciting moment for everyone associated with FC Bengaluru United. It is the result of years of hard work, belief and resilience. There were moments of heartbreak, near misses and setbacks along the way, but the club stayed committed to the vision of building something meaningful and sustainable for Bengaluru football," Gaurav Manchanda, owner, FCBU, said.

Porto launches Dragon Force academy
Portuguese club FC Porto announced the launch of its Dragon Force academy in Bengaluru in partnership with Alchemy International Football Academy. The long-term development project is aimed at nurturing young talent, developing coaches and managers, and contributing to the sustainable growth of football in the country.
The Bengaluru operation will be hosted at the Center for Sports Excellence.
"This new project represents another solid step in the club's internationalisation process, bringing FC Porto's identity, methodology and values to one of the most promising football markets in the world," FC Porto president Andre Villas-Boas said.

Samant SA posts win
Samant Sports Academy defeated RT Nagar Hebbal 4-2 in a Group-A match of the KSFA C-division league football championship here on Friday.
Other results: Group-A: Raman Sports Academy bt Bangalore North 2-0; Balaharka bt GRK Youth Club 12-1; **Group-B:** Alchemy Intl FA bt Stadium 5-0; Hawks United Sports Academy bt Gopalan 4-1; Samba bt Chitradurga 5-2.

Inter-district football league from today

Sports Bureau

The Karnataka State Football Association inter-district football league will be held in Shivamogga and Mangaluru.

The Shivamogga leg will begin on Saturday at the Nehru Stadium, with six teams in the fray. In Mangaluru, seven districts will be participating.

The winners from both legs are set to play in a final knockout phase in Bengaluru.